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Impact, Implementation, and Insights of Peace Education: A Case Study of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation Program at the University of Rwanda

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LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

Impact, Implementation, and Insights of Peace Education:
A Case Study of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation Program at the University of Rwanda

by

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Impact, Implementation, and Insights of Peace Education:

A Case Study of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation Program

at the University of Rwanda

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DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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* *

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I don't know exactly what I'm doing right
to deserve such a robust, beautiful tapestry
of amazing people to feel close to,
but whatever the reason,
I know I feel abundance
when I think about it.
Thank you.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAUP	American Association of University Professors
ARCT-RUHUKA	Rwanda Association of Trauma Counselors
BRD	Rwanda Development Bank
BREDA	UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Africa in Dakar, Senegal
CASS	UR College of Arts and Social Sciences (at the UR)
CAVM	UR College of Animal Science and Veterinary Medicine
CBE	UR College of Business and Economics (Formerly SFB; also referring to the Kigali campus in the Gikondo neighborhood)
CCM	UR Centre for Conflict Management
CGT	Constructivist Grounded Theory
CMHS	UR College of Medical and Health Sciences
CNLG	National Commission for the Fight Against Genocide
CODESRIA	Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DGIE	Rwandan Directorate General of Immigration and Emigration
DHHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
DRC	The Democratic Republic of the Congo
DSTR	Rwandan Ministry of Education Directorate of Science, Technology, and Research
DT	Discourse Theme
DVC	Deputy Vice Chancellor
EDPRS 2	Rwandan Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2013-18
ESP	Education for Sustainable Peace (Rwandan program to mainstream peace education in K12 schools)
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GoR	Government of Rwanda
HEC	Rwandan Ministry of Education Higher Education Council
HECB	Higher Education Coordinating Board
HGS	Home Grown Solutions (Department of the Rwanda Governance Board)
HLI	Higher Learning Institution
IB	International Baccalaureate
ICC	International Criminal Court
IQ	Interview Question(s)

IRDP ..... Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace
IRB ..... Institutional Review Board
KHI ..... Kigali Health Institute
KIE ..... Kigali Institute of Education
KIST ..... Kigali Institute of Science and Technology
LDCs ..... Least Developed Countries
LMU ..... Loyola Marymount University
MDGs ..... Millennium Development Goals
MINECOFIN ..... Rwandan Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MINEDUC ..... Rwandan Ministry of Education
NAR ..... Never Again Rwanda
NCIV ..... National Council for International Visitors
NISTEP ..... National Institute of Science and Technology Policy
NPPA ..... National Public Prosecution Authority
NURC ..... National Unity and Reconciliation
OECD ..... Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIE ..... Office of Institutional Effectiveness
OPC ..... Overall Programme Coordinator
PAR ..... Participatory Action Research
PJSA ..... Peace and Justice Studies Association
RCEXR ..... Rwandan Ministry of Health Ethics Committee Application for Research Clearance
RCS ..... Rwanda Correctional Service
RDRC ..... Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission
REB ..... Rwanda Education Board
RETHC ..... Rwandan Ministry of Health Ethics Committee Research Ethical Approval Form
RGB ..... Rwanda Governance Board
RORE ..... Rate of Return on Education
RPEP ..... Rwanda Peace Education Program (Predecessor of the ESP)
RQ ..... Research Question
RWF ..... Rwandan Franc(s)
SDGs ..... Sustainable Development Goals
SFB ..... UR School of Finance and Banking (Now called CBE; also referring to the campus in the Kigali neighborhood of Gikondo)
SFCG ..... Search for Common Ground
SGS ..... University of Göthenburg's School of Global Studies in Sweden
SIDA ..... Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

UCEA ..... University Council for Educational Administration
ULK ..... Kigali Independent University
UNDP ..... United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO ..... United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNGA ..... United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR ..... United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF ..... United Nations Children's Fund
UNR ..... National University of Rwanda (Predecessor of the University of Rwanda prior to the 2013 consolidation)
UNSG ..... United Nations Secretary General
UP ..... Higher Institute of Umutara Polytechnic
UPEACE ..... United Nations University for Peace in Costa Rica
UR ..... University of Rwanda
USIP ..... United States Institute of Peace
WLAC ..... West Los Angeles College
WLE ..... Women Leading Education

ABSTRACT

Impact, Implementation and Insights of Peace Education:

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Higher education is arguably critical for healing and stabilization in postconflict contexts, by developing leaders who value peace and have the skill sets to achieve it in various sectors. A rapidly growing body of literature concludes that peace education in particular has great potential to transform postconflict communities, both in higher education and at other levels of schooling. Yet there exists little rigorous analysis of the decisions faced by educational leaders responsible for implementing such programs, particularly those in postconflict settings where the needs are uniquely challenging.

This qualitative investigation documented the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program, managed by the Centre for Conflict Management (CCM) within the University of Rwanda's College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS), one of the first of its kind in the region. The goal of this study was to use interviews and field notes collected during a six-week fieldwork period to highlight lessons from the experiences and perspectives of colleagues who have typically been on the outskirts of the conversation about how formalized peace education can contribute to leadership development and national stability.

Participants included faculty members, administrators, and alumnae, as well as leaders affiliated with the Rwandan Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and various civil society organizations. The study led to twelve key findings aligned with the three research questions, each of which is similarly aligned with a corresponding discourse theme and three clusters of interview questions, as well as three related overarching researcher recommendations for policy and practice, grounded in participant perspectives.

Keywords: higher education, Africa, peace studies, peace education, educational leadership, social justice

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Since wars begin in the minds of men,
it is in the minds of men that the defence of peace must be constructed.
(Preamble to the UNESCO Constitution, 1945)

This investigation documented the nuances of the M.A. in Peace Studies program at the University of Rwanda (UR), one of the first of its kind in the region, with the goal of highlighting lessons that the fields of peace education and educational leadership can glean from colleagues typically on the outskirts of the conversation about how it can contribute to leadership development and national stability.

There currently exists little rigorous analysis of the decisions faced by educational leaders responsible for implementing formal peace education programs in such postconflict settings (e.g., Bajaj, 2008; Brantmeier, 2010; King, 2005), which has limited the scholarly conversation about how peace education can contribute to leadership development and national stability. Using interviews, focus groups, and document analysis, this research sought to highlight the perspectives of African higher education leaders who are not only contributing to a field typically dominated by Western voices, but whose efforts are strengthening the stability of their postconflict communities. Participants in the study included faculty members affiliated with the program, along with Directors, Deans, and program alumnae, as well as leaders affiliated with the Rwandan Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and various civil society organizations.

Roadmap

What follows in this chapter is first a brief narrative of what brought me as a researcher to this convergence of topics, then assertion of a definition of peace education that I have chosen

to use for the purposes of this study, along with contextualization of peace education as a field. Next, I provide a detailed description of the educational landscape of Rwanda and the significance of focusing attention on a peace education program there. Following these details about the field and Rwanda itself, I explain the problem this study investigated, the research questions generated from considering that problem, my intended contributions to theory and practice in the field as a result of this study, as well as its potential broader significance.

From there, I offer an initial introduction to the two prongs of my conceptual framework, as well as my three discourse themes (both of which are elucidated in comprehensive detail in Chapter 2), followed by my study procedures and the limitations, delimitations, and assumptions that influenced the project, and which pay particular attention to my positionality.

Finally, I define key terms and outline how the remainder of the study (i.e., Chapters 2 through 5) will be organized.

Personal Background

My own interest in this particular topic began 15 years ago, towards the end of my junior year at American University. I was lucky enough to hear a lecture given by Colman McCarthy, a peace educator in Washington, DC whose radical ideas changed something in me. I learned that he also taught at a number of institutions in the metro area ranging from Georgetown Law, to the innovative charter School Without Walls, to the wealthy Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, to the rougher crowd at Wilson High School, and many others.

I made it my senior thesis project to shadow him to these classes, chronicling his efforts, attempting to address the question of whether peace education is effective and what that even means. As difficult a question as that was to operationalize and answer, I ultimately found that

students at each of the schools he taught in exhibited similar reactions to McCarthy when he exposed them to the themes of peace education: many were utterly transformed, in their outlook on the world, their moral sensibilities, and even their career paths going forward. I found similar stories in the literature on peace education, and thus began my interest in my research topic.

At the same time, as part of my international relations major, I focused on international development, especially in postconflict settings, and was particularly fascinated by postgenocide contexts. I took classes and read as widely as I could on the subject.

When I graduated, I spent about four years working, first overseas as an adult educator, then in New York in international education, specifically focused on a grant program my organization administered called the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa. There I learned so much about the critical role higher education plays in development and sustained peace, and the related, dire need for greater investment in the revitalization of the higher education sector in Africa specifically, given its history with austere funding cuts.

From those roles, I moved on to my graduate studies, this time focused on both comparative education and international development via a dual degree I designed between two Boston schools. However, I shifted my focus more explicitly to Africa, taking the opportunity to write as many papers focused on that region as I could, and eventually writing my master's thesis on the topic of international exchanges at African universities as a tool for sustainable growth. Meanwhile, I also took the opportunity to be a teaching assistant and co-instructed multiple undergraduate peace studies classes at one of my graduate institutions, where once again, I found students who confirmed that these courses were life-changing for them, regardless of their intended major or future career plans.

Thus, when I began my doctoral program at Loyola Marymount University, I knew my ideal dissertation topic would combine my ongoing intrigue in African higher education, particularly Rwanda given its experience with postgenocide reconstruction, and my long-standing passion for peace education.

I was lucky enough to be acquainted with my advisor, Dr. Elizabeth C. Reilly, very early on in the program, who not only is one of the few professors with extensive international research experience in an otherwise very domestically focused program, but also was generous enough to invite me to accompany her to the Women Leading Education conference in Ghana. Because of her advocacy on my behalf, I was finally able to go to Sub-Saharan Africa and meet people firsthand who were leading in higher education across the continent. It was an extraordinary experience to be at a conference where over half of the attendees were African female academics. I presented a very early iteration of this dissertation project and invited their input into its development. After receiving their insightful and gracious feedback, I was struck by the power of co-creating a research project with the community on which you plan to focus, an experience that has informed the design of my dissertation research ever since.

Shortly thereafter, while attending the annual Peace and Justice Studies Association (PJSA) conference in 2013, I heard about the innovative M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program at the University of Rwanda but discovered much to my dismay that there was no existing scholarly literature documenting the program. I decided—with Dr. Reilly's strong encouragement—to fill the gap myself and embrace the opportunity to use my dissertation to focus on a singularly unique Rwandan context for peace education at the university level.

What is Peace Education?

For a deeper understanding of the study that follows, it is important to review the variations of what peace education is imagined as and what it aims to be, as well as what its priorities and pedagogies typically consist of. Snauwært (2011) underscored how critical it is to establish the parameters of peace education, for "the ways in which peace is conceived determine the legitimacy, theory, and practice of peace education" (p. 316). Many scholars agree that peace education embraces as a central tenet the necessity of addressing inequities in the world and calling upon students to consider their role in perpetuating and potentially pushing back against such inequities, in order to transform them (e.g., Bajaj, 2008; Haavaelsrud, 2008; Hantzopoulos, 2011; Klein, 2007; Reardon, 1988; Reardon & Cabezudo, 2002).

Formal Definition of Peace Education

For the purposes of this study, I adopted the definition offered by Fountain (1999) for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), namely that it refers to

> the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level. (p. 1)

Priorities and Objectives of Peace Education

Many theorists conclude that typical schools in the United States have primarily served as sites of class reproduction, where hegemonic forms of education have propped up existing forms of both direct and structural violence (e.g., Anyon, 1980; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Bowles & Gintis 1976, Hantzopoulos, 2011; Oakes, 1986). It has been argued for decades that peace education has potential to transform these structures not only by confronting the issues that most

directly pertain to ongoing oppression, but by exposing the fact that we are all affected by and contributing to various forms of oppression (Galtung, 1969).

Colman McCarthy[1] (2011), a peace educator at the high school, college and graduate levels in the Washington, DC metro area who has had more than 8,000 students since 1982 succinctly explained that

> I have been accused of teaching a one-sided course. Perhaps, except that my course *is* the other side, the one that students aren't getting in conventional history or political science courses, which present violent, militaristic solutions as rational and necessary. (pp. 22-23)

Kester and Booth (2010) agreed that the practice of peace education is "deeply located in the positionality of the educators [and] learners" (p. 499) and is inherently and necessarily a political act. Indeed, Freire (1998) argued that all education constitutes a political act, but an important distinction of his work supports peace education's emphasis on education's political nature and embraces the intentionality such awareness requires in order to educate responsibly.

Furthermore, peace education has typically sought to shift the paradigm from a focus on the typical "big players" to a focus on the vulnerable and the consequences they endure as a consequence of decisions made (e.g., Hantzopoulos, 2011; Kester & Booth, 2010; McCarthy, 2011; Owens & Valesky, 2015; Reardon, 2009; Snauwært, 2011). For example, whereas an international relations course might utilize the theme of analyzing how national security is impacted by various historical events such as 9/11, peace education would also analyze how human security is affected (i.e., the ability of people, especially those without political, social, financial or cultural capital to meet their needs). Many are familiar with the saying that history is written by the victors; to that end, peace education seeks to create a place in both its content and

[1] Full disclosure: This is the educator whom I (as the principal investigator) shadowed throughout my senior year at American University, during which time I wrote my senior thesis on the effectiveness of peace education.

its pedagogy for the voices of those who are traditionally marginalized in various arenas of knowledge and learning.

Such themes of liberation and empowerment have only grown more prominent as the field has developed, particularly since the reframing advocated by the scholar team of Trujillo, Bowland, Myers, Richards, and Roy (2008), which strongly emphasized the potential people have to make meaning and new realities together, using peace education as a vehicle. Thus, peace education asserts that social transformation is possible, in both persons and in institutions.

Interdisciplinary in nature, peace education programs have challenged students to consider social and political events through a systemic lens that, rather than remaining neutral, intentionally asserts that social transformation is possible, both in individuals and in institutions. Furthermore, peace education prioritizes the voices of the vulnerable and marginalized when discussing important historical moments, decisions, and controversies.

Thus, there has tended to be heavy emphasis on collective violence, such as genocide and ethnic cleansing, along with how inequality, globalization and poverty impact such violence (e.g., Bajaj, 2008; Coy & Hancock, 2010; Haavaelsrud, 2008; Hantzopoulos, 2011; Klein, 2007; Kester & Booth, 2010; Reardon, 1988; Reardon & Cabezudo, 2002).

These priorities have been frequently connected in peace education literature to Sen's (2009) and Nussbaum's (2000) conceptions of social justice as *realizations-focused* and *capabilities-oriented* (Snauwært, 2011), meaning that peace education ideally expands the abilities of individuals and communities to be and do what they freely choose.

Such concepts provided the backdrop, the assumptions, and the motivator for both the three research questions and the design of the study itself, in addition to lending moral urgency

to the need for programs that focus on peace education in the development of education leaders, in order to ensure their inclusion in the education community at large. In U.S. higher education alone, the number of peace studies programs has expanded from only one in 1970, to more than 185 in 2019 (PJSA, 2019) and with nearly 1,400 degrees and awards earned in Peace and Conflict Resolution in 2016 (Deloitte, Datawheel, & Hidalgo, 2016).

However, it should be noted that, apart from university degree programs in the United States, peace education in practice has generally been present in postconflict countries primarily in the form of community-based or NGO-supported contexts, often with youth, and particularly those experiencing intergroup violence (Ashton, 2007, p. 40).

Educational Landscape of the Research Setting

International higher education expert Philip Altbach (2011) argued that "the professoriate in the developing countries is a profession on the periphery" (p. 207). Nowhere is this marginalization more acute than in Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., Mohamedbhai, 2011; Odhiambo, 2011; Ondari-Okemwa, 2007; Yusuf, Saint, & Nabeshima, 2009). The World Bank in particular, as a major funder of African education during the Structural Adjustment period in the 1980s, chose to systematically deprioritize investment in higher education (e.g., Adetunji Babatunde, 2012; Alidou, Caffentzis, & Federici, 2008; Onwuka, 2006).

One of the consequences of the structural decay that has characterized many African universities in the past 40 years has been their relative alienation from the rest of the academic world (e.g., Assié-Lumumba, 2006; Britz, Lor, Coetzee, & Bester, 2006; Gyimah-Brempong, Paddison, & Mituku, 2006; Mama, 2006; Ng'ethe, 2003; O'Hara, 2010; Sawyerr, 2004; Shabani, 1998; Teferra & Altbach, 2003; Tettey, 2006; Yusuf et al., 2009).

Research capability remains particularly dire in African universities; the continent ranks last in the world in total contribution to world research at less than 2% (e.g., Chandiwana & Ornbjerg, 2003; National Institute of Science and Technology Policy [NISTEP], 2010; Ondari-Okemwa, 2007). Meanwhile, the two largest clearinghouses for academic publication records—Science Citation Index and Social Science Citation Index—are the primary sources many nations use to measure the research productivity of their academics. Yet the journals included in these two indices are nearly all published in the global North and only includes a small sample from the full population of existing journals worldwide (Altbach, 2011). This trend means that much of the academic work of those in developing countries remains unacknowledged in the broader scholarly discourse, a situation that contributes to stagnation and difficulty in raising academic rigor at African universities.

Yet as Assié-Lumumba (2006) reminded us, only these institutions are poised to "creat[e] the human resources capable of making the right decisions for Africa's interests" (p. 134). Furthermore, postconflict countries have often claimed in the rhetoric of their strategic planning processes that higher education is critical for the healing and stabilization process, by developing leaders who value peace and have the skill sets to achieve it in various sectors (e.g., Prewitt, 2004; Ramphele, 2004).

Atteh (1996) insightfully suggested that the state of African universities is "a reflection of the lack of education among Africa's tyrannical rulers, hence the low appreciation of education" (p. 36). This possibility is supported by other data; compared to spending on basic human needs such as health, shelter and, of course, education, military expenditures have increased at a far faster rate in Sub-Saharan Africa (Atteh, 1996, p. 36).

Even if there were spending on these other critical sectors, there would still be a severe shortage of professionals, scholars and technicians who are skilled enough to guide their nations through the challenges they face (Hoffman, 1995-1996, p. 83). Without a growing base of strong leaders who have been trained in rigorous, interdisciplinary fashion, many countries will continue to experience vacuums of power that will likely continue to be filled by those with the force to consolidate and exploit that power. Thus, the very development process has been and could continue to be hindered by the absence of excellent higher education institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa that prioritize peacemaking explicitly.

To that end, one particular realm of higher education that has been growing steadily, especially in postconflict regions, is peace education (Kester, 2008). A rapidly growing body of literature concludes that peace education in particular, at every level of schooling, has great potential to transform post- conflict communities by developing learners and leaders who value stability and the tools necessary to maintain it (e.g., Bekerman & Zembylas, 2012; King, 2005; Quaynor, 2015).

Why Study Peace Education in Rwanda?

Rwanda was a unique site for examination of a peace studies program, given its historical struggles with maintaining peace. Despite being a small East African country only about the size of the state of Maryland, ethnic tensions between the *Hutu* and the *Tutsi* escalated to genocide in April 1994 and left over 800,000 *Tutsi* dead—more than 10% of the total national population and nearly 75% of the *Tutsi* population at that time (Gourevitch, 1999). The mass violence that resulted in this shocking loss of life occurred in the span of only about 100 days and was carried out mostly by civilian death squads known as the *Interahamwe*.

One of the most sobering lessons of all from the tragedy in Rwanda was the degree to which many predictable sociological phenomena that have been demonstrated to predictably lead to mass violence or genocide (Stanton, 2013) were happening in plain view, in many cases even reported in the media and discussed among international decision makers (Staub, 1999).

Rwanda has since been making efforts to rebuild in every arena to prevent such violence from happening again (Mazimpaka, 2000). For example, the country has been working diligently to rebuild higher education, along with addressing broad-spectrum issues that international development scholars know to be fundamental to long-term stability in a society, such as gender equity and economic growth (e.g., Kristof & WuDunn, 2009; Republic of Rwanda, 2000).

One of the more recent and innovative efforts to achieve these goals has been the launch and development of University of Rwanda's aforementioned M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program at the Centre for Conflict Management.

Outline of the Problem

Research has abundantly demonstrated that education is integral to the success of development and peacebuilding, and indeed, can contribute to exacerbation of conflict—violent or otherwise—depending on how it is implemented. Although Sub-Saharan African countries have deep experience with various forms of collective violence, the region has few institutionalized peace education programs in place, albeit it does boast a great many grassroots, community-based peace education initiatives.

Despite the unique nature of the few peace education programs that do exist in postconflict institutional settings, there is currently little rigorous analysis of the decisions faced by educational leaders responsible for implementing them. Indeed, there has been little empirical

documentation of what goes into building a university program focused on peace education anywhere in the world, but especially in high stakes contexts like Rwanda (e.g., Ashton, 2007; Harris & Lewer, 2007; Maxwell, Enslin, & Maxwell, 2007).

Additionally, the lack of literature focused on these contexts means that the degree to which such programs in postconflict nations take into consideration the goals of their public sector remains unclear, and thus the real impact of such programs on a country's healing remains unexamined (e.g., Shirazi, 2011; Webster, 2013).

Without documented analysis of their goals, priorities, and implementation practices, peace education programs cannot learn from each other, and stakeholders have fewer benchmarks to know if programs are working, to what ends, and who is ultimately being served (e.g., Harris, 2008; Lum, 2013). This gap in the literature on peace education in postconflict settings was instrumental in leading me to my three guiding research questions for this study.

Research Questions

Although my process for the development of the research questions was iterative and emergent, the final three questions that underpinned my study in Rwanda included the following:

1. IMPACT (Intended and Actual): How do University of Rwanda administrators, faculty members, and alumni affiliated with the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation envision the program's contribution to the development of leaders who will prioritize and be equipped to maintain peace and stability?

    1a. How are these insider perspectives of the M.A. program different from those of leaders engaged in peacebuilding outside the M.A. program?

2. IMPLEMENTATION: How are educational leaders and other stakeholders making decisions related to achieving M.A. program goals? (e.g., What strategies are being employed? What constraints and tradeoffs do they face? What mission drove the program's evolution?)
3. INSIGHTS: From the perspective of study participants, what lessons can the M.A. program offer the fields of peace education and educational leadership?

Intended Contributions to Theory and Practice

Inextricably linked to the three research questions were the primary purposes of this study, which were also threefold:

- To co-create a data-rich, nuanced narrative of the vision administrators, faculty members, and students have for how the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program might contribute to Rwandan peace and stability (and to compare those visions to the goals of leaders doing peace work in other arenas of Rwandan society);
- To uncover the strategies being used by program stakeholders (i.e., teaching faculty members, administrators, and alumni) affiliated with the program to implement and improve it in a manner that they deem successful, along with the constraints and tradeoffs these decision makers face; and
- To triangulate my research with existing literature on goals, pedagogies, and best practices of peace education and educational leadership in order to glean lessons for other programs, including those in the United States.

Significance of Research

When developing this project, I surmised that there were three areas of significance, in terms of its potential impact.

One is that the aims of peace education are arguably linked to the goals of the nation as outlined in Rwanda Vision 2020 (e.g., Nkulu, 2005; Republic of Rwanda, 2000). This document delineates a development program launched by the Government of Rwanda (GoR) in 2000, whose outlined aims included good governance and a capable state; human resource development and a knowledge-based economy; private sector-led development; infrastructure development; productive, high value, and market-oriented agriculture and regional and international integration (Republic of Rwanda, 2000).

These are all outcomes that can only flourish in a stable, peaceful environment, which is what peace education seeks to foster (Fountain, 1999). Thus, documentation of the thought processes that go into various facets of this program would be of direct interest to policymakers and people of influence in other spheres apart from higher education. Specifically, I argued that the project could yield invaluable lessons for leaders working in resource-constrained environments or postconflict learning communities similar to Rwanda.

More broadly, I operated on the presumption that the University of Rwanda's M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program (particularly a detailed narrative of how it came about and developed) could be a model for many others, nationally and internationally, and the writing about it would be seminal. Jean-Marie and Normore (2010) concurred that

> learning from the research on successful practices and policies in educational leadership in other countries becomes critically important for transcending cultural norms [and] national and international boundaries so that nations can establish international networks [and] can generate cross-fertilizations of ideas and experiences. (pp. 24-25)

Applying this attitude to the M.A. program has potential for enormous long-term impact by developing leaders who will carry Rwanda into a new legacy of peaceful coexistence and the setting of a regional model. In the wake of near-constant violence in recent decades, researchers agree that creating societies with increased opportunity and decreased suffering is the surest route to preventing such violence (e.g., Galtung, 1969; Stanton, 2013; Staub, 1999).

Finally, I grounded my rationale for this study in the aspiration that focusing on a Rwandan program provides increased opportunity and encouragement for the developing world to join meaningfully in the scholarly conversation around peace education. The individuals whose voices I have highlighted are the academic and civil society leaders directly engaged in making Rwanda an increasingly peaceful, stable place. Not only that, but theirs are voices that tend not to be heard as widely as those in the Western world and increasing global exposure to their program could serve to expand resources available to them as they grow, including partnerships with peace education programs in other nations.

Conceptual Framework

I grounded this study's conceptual framework in two ideas: that structural violence is at the root of all conflict, and that my use of decolonizing methodology as my ethos on the ground could counter such violence.

Structural Violence at the Root of Conflict

The notion of structural violence is rooted in Johan Galtung (1969)'s complementary theories about negative versus positive peace. The former is merely the absence of war, or other "hot" violence that involves the inflicting of physical harm on other beings. In contrast, positive peace implies not only a nonviolent environment, but also the flourishing of other inclusive

social values, such as justice, fairness, equity, and democratic participation. When there are systems or institutions in place that hinder these values, that prevent people from meeting basic needs, or that exploit, dehumanize or repress people from self-actualization in its many forms, Galtung would consider these elements to be structural violence.

More contemporary scholars such as Falcón (2016) concur with Galtung (1969) about the critical importance of acknowledging the sometimes subtle but often pervasive nature of structural violence. Falcón explained that "what makes any social categories privileged–white, male, class or heterosexuality to name a few—are the societal structures and legal standards that have formed to uphold and normalize these hierarchies" (Falcón, 2016, p. 177).

What is especially important to note here, however, is peace education's unique perspective on structural violence, namely that the inequities and human tragedies that arise from it are not natural (as people are so often inclined to conclude about phenomena like poverty and epidemic disease). Rather, these phenomena are correlated directly with actions we do or do not take as decision makers. Thus, peace education prioritizes the agency of human beings and the malleability of cultures and systems.

Countering Structural Violence with Decolonizing Methodology

Not only does peace education as a field claim to illuminate and counter structural violence, but so too does a research practice called decolonizing methodology, developed in particular detail by Smith (2013). In Chapter 3, I elaborate further on how this practice actually served to inform my field work and the relationships I built with Rwandans, but on a theoretical level, it is important to highlight that this methodology serves as a direct confrontation of

existing power structures, with "power" meant in the Foucauldian sense[2] as explicated by Vanner (2015), in that it is "exercised and productive, dispersed through social interactions, operating at the micro level, and best analyzed by examining strategies, tactics and procedures" (p. 2).

This multifaceted research ethos not only stresses the importance of researcher reflexivity and transparency about their own privilege, but also encourages constructive community strengthening actions on the part of the researcher that actively counter structural violence in the research context. Thus, decolonizing methodology is a tool that allows researchers to prioritize "social justice as both a process and a goal" (Bell, 2007, p. 1).

These two related thematic areas provide the backdrop, the assumptions and the motivator for the research questions and the methodological design of the study.

Review of Discourse in Three Themes

Three broad themes emerged that were pertinent in conducting a thorough review of the existing discourse pertaining to the examination of the M.A. program at the UR:

1. Higher education is integral to sustainable development and peace, especially in postconflict countries (e.g., Hurtado, 2007; McLean Hilker, 2009; Turner Johnson & Kamaara, 2014);
2. There are unique structural challenges for higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., Assié-Lumumba, 2006; Gyimah-Brempong et al., 2006; Mama, 2006; Ng'ethe, 2003; O'Hara, 2010; Sawyerr, 2004; Shabani, 1998; Teferra & Altbach, 2003; Tettey, 2006);

[2] Referencing Foucault, 1980.

3. Critical peace education offers a constructive response to structural violence (e.g., Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2011; Freire, 1993; Hantzopoulos, 2011; Kester & Booth, 2010; Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 2009; Snauwært, 2011).

Study Procedures

I was guided in the design and execution of this study by two central ideas. The first was decolonizing methodology, as an ethical compass for how I conduct myself in the field, and the second was the theory of *formative assessment*, in that the goal was to co-create a useful narrative of the program, rather than inserting myself into the culture of the program as an evaluator (e.g., Looney, 2011; Willink, Gutierrez-Perez, Shukri, & Stein, 2014).

The reason for adopting these concepts as the guiding philosophies of the study was to ensure that Rwandan stakeholders in the M.A. program understood that it was meant to capture their story, not evaluate their effectiveness, and to continually reexamine how I, as a researcher in multiple positions of privilege could counter existing asymmetrical power structures that impact the study.

The study included individual interviews with 30 administration, faculty members, and alumnae of the program, along with civil society leaders. I received initial permission to conduct field research from key administrators of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program, who wrote a letter of affiliation on my behalf to submit to the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC), and which ultimately allowed me to enter the country.

Specific individuals I interviewed included (with some overlap in categories): the Principal (i.e., Dean) of UR-CASS, 11 teaching faculty members in the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program, four administrators at UR's Centre for Conflict

Management, four alumnae of the program, seven other UR administrator, two staff members from the Higher Education Council at the MINEDUC, as well as 10 civil society officials who could speak to peace work happening in communities outside the university setting. I conducted this field research over a six-week period during May and June 2017.

Limitations, Delimitations, and Assumptions

One factor that may limit the generalizability of the study was the focus on only one program, specifically at the University of Rwanda. This program is not one that has any comparable peers at other Rwandan institutions; furthermore, the University of Rwanda is not a higher education institution that is necessarily representative of all higher education in Rwanda, since there are a number of private institutions as well.

Only a tiny minority of students attend any higher education institution in the country, much less the comparatively elite University of Rwanda. This reality means that the students being impacted by participation in the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program are also not representative of the average citizen in the nation, though such privilege does not, of course, preclude such students from having a powerful impact on the nation reaching its coexistence and reconciliation-focused goals after having gone through the program.

Thus, one assumption with which I entered this study was that the program is seeking to invest particular attention in a select group of students whom they believe demonstrate promise and leadership potential. Another assumption I made is that a detailed narrative-rich case study of this program, albeit only one program, would offer insights into what might be possible for other peace education university programs, especially in terms of developing them with an eye towards contributing to public goals.

Lastly, it is important to note that I conducted this study in part from an *emic* (insider) viewpoint and in part from an *etic* (outsider) viewpoint (Pike, 1990). Specifically, I as the author am someone who has had deep involvement in the practice and study of peace education, particularly in United States university contexts, and thus must disclose that I had a preexisting interest in expanding its effectiveness and scope.

In this way, I was an "insider" in the realm of peace education academic scholarship, yet I was a non-native doing work in a Rwandan university context. Not only had my Rwandan colleagues never met me in person before my fieldwork, but also there were power dynamics at work that had the potential to further entrench my outsider status without careful consideration, which led me necessarily to a detailed consideration of my positionality.

Positionality

As the concept of *intersectionality* has reminded us since the phrase was first coined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw (1989) three decades ago, each person's identity is multifaceted, with all aspects overlapping, fluctuating in their importance depending on the situation and—at times—even contradicting one another (e.g., Brah & Phoenix, 2004; Falcón & Nash, 2015; Harris, 2016; Pratt-Clarke, 2012; Willink et al., 2014).

In my case, there were admittedly elements of my identity that placed me lower on the totem pole of academic power, such as my status as a doctoral student, which have made me beholden to the time constraints and fairly rigid methodological constraints of both a doctoral committee and an Institutional Review Board (Vanner, 2015). These requirements meant that realistically, I could not do an entirely emergent, co-created study because I was required to lay

out my methodology clearly and transparently ahead of my fieldwork, in order to be approved for research involving human subjects.

However, apart from that limitation, many other aspects of my identity placed me in a position of privilege or advantage as I conducted this project. For example, I could not treat as an afterthought the fact that I am a White American female scholar doing research in postcolonial, postconflict Sub-Saharan Africa. Although White people are obviously not the racial majority in Rwanda, those I spoke to in my study almost unanimously considered a connection to academia to be part of their own intersectional identities, and on a global scale, academia and publishing circles in particular do indeed remain dominated by White Western scholars.

That being the case, in order for my study to be considered a valid and ethical contribution to the scholarly conversation on global peace education, I considered self-reflection on my positionality (and accounting for it throughout the study) to be one of the most important elements of this work.

Whiteness. I begin with my race. I acknowledge that I have been fortunate to have a fairly unique experience of growing up in a primarily African American school district outside Washington, DC and thus have gotten a small taste of what it feels like to be a racial minority (and subsequently a personal connection to the need for antiracist work by white allies). This personal history means I cannot entirely relate to the experiences of White scholars who have written sentiments such as "belonging has settled deep in my body. . . . As I move through my daily life, I fit in. My race is unremarkable [and] in virtually every situation deemed 'normal' or valuable in society, I belong racially" (DiAngelo, 2012, pp. 134-135).

That experience was not my personal story of childhood; however, as I moved towards adulthood, I noticed the advantages accruing to me partly because of my Whiteness. I realized that although I had experienced mistrust, alienation and other anecdotal incidences of race-based prejudice, the world I navigated also contained institutionally racist elements that afforded me benefits. Though I may not have experienced that correlation directly, I nonetheless can attest that those advantages "shape[d] the way I move[d] through the world, my goals and expectations, what I reach for in life and what I expect to find" (DiAngelo, 2012, p. 135).

I once thought I was simply confident, proactive, and communicative, traits that may all be genuinely attributable to my temperament, but undoubtedly, these ways of being were reinforced by how I was treated out in the world. Even so, for years, I carried my history as a point of pride, imagining I was one of the special White people who really "got it", and that I was somehow existing in a vacuum outside the systems of oppressions that people of color faced. I was engaging in a subtle "[W]hite racial innocence" (DiAngelo, 2012) that left me with too much defensiveness about being lumped in with "less enlightened" White people and too little willingness to interrogate my own attitudes and behavior for racist overtones.

In fact, it was really only as I entered my doctoral program in 2013 that I was confronted with my self-imposed selective blindness in this respect. I finally began to accept the reality that "racism is [a] relationship between [W]hite people and people of color . . . built into the very fabric of society [and] no one who resides in society is outside this relationship" (DiAngelo, 2012, p. 165). Now, six years later, I embrace the notion that no intensity of antiracist perspective nor depth of commitment as an ally exempt me or any other White person from the social standing my race has afforded me (e.g., Pennington & Prater, 2016; Scheurich, 1997).

Female self-identification. Even being female, which is comparatively less privileged in academia and much of the working world, is mitigated by my Whiteness in my actual work, at least compared to other women I encounter. As DiAngelo (2012) asserted, in the media particularly, there remains a persistent and powerful trend in which "White women stand for all women [and] we are constantly reinforced to see [W]hite [femininity] as the ideal" (p. 137).

Similarly, Pennington and Prater (2016) cautioned that the ways in which White women are socialized into fearful silence about race, seeing mention of it as uncomfortable taboo—a phenomenon that they refer to as "[W]hite politeness"—makes them especially vulnerable to naive colorblindness in their academic lives by influencing their methodological and interpretive choices as educational researchers.

Not seeking to locate Whiteness as a discussion within their work has done a disservice to the scholarship of White women in that their research in some cases has ultimately "relied on assumptions, lacked critical reflection, and reified [W]hite privilege throughout the research process with no clear benefits to the [participants]" (Pennington & Prater, 2016, pp. 919-920).

American university affiliation. By sheer virtue of being a citizen of the United States, I enjoy certain privileges, both as a researcher and in the world generally (e.g., Falcón, 2016; Smith, 2013; Vanner, 2015). Although there is scant literature written specifically on the subject of how being an American privileges academics in particular, there is an acknowledgement in fields such as Critical White Studies and other intersectionally-oriented studies that such a dynamic exists.

This dynamic offered researchers affiliated with American universities what Peggy McIntosh (1992) called "conferred dominance" (p. 34) and what Falcón referred to as "imperial

privilege" (p. 176). Indeed, to be a White researcher with a United States university connection is to feel this advantage even more. Even to be perceived that way confers certain benefits; during my own study abroad in China on numerous occasions, I experienced the phenomenon of being treated with noticeably greater respect and interest than my fellow students of color simply because my then-blonde hair and light eyes made me "look more like an American" to the locals.

Yet, in reality, many American scholars find they are treated with extra scholarly deference, regardless of their race, because the "geographical contingence" of their affiliation gives them the kind of status often afforded to White people (e.g., Bonnett & Nakak, 2003; Faria & Mollett, 2014). Bonnett and Nayak (2003) explained that "[W]hiteness is never simply about [W]hite bodies or 'cultures'. Rather, [W]hiteness is a structural advantage signifying success, modernity and wealth" (p. 88, as cited in Faria & Mollett, 2014). Related practical privileges that are tied into this higher status include not having to secure a visa to visit numerous countries and greater purchasing power in currency exchange, among others.

Native English speaker status. Related to the hegemonic dominance of Western scholarship, particularly scholarship from the United States, is the elevated status of English-speaking scholars (Falcón, 2016). As previously mentioned, most publication indices primarily include only English language journals in their sample (Altbach, 2011), and indeed, it remains the *lingua franca* of academic scholarship and of higher education instruction in most of the Western world and much of the developing world. Rwanda is part of this trend, having shifted from French to English in K12 and higher education instruction since 2008 (McGreal, 2008).

Implications for researcher reflexivity. These interrelated dimensions of my own identity led me to the conclusion that I must accept personal responsibility for spending whatever

time is necessary to ensure I was not perpetuating structures of privilege and domination in the research I conducted. In the same vein, I concluded that I must carefully reflect on *why* I was pursuing (and continue to pursue) "racialized research" in the developing world. Through inquiry into my own privilege as a White, female, American, native English-speaking researcher, I sought to decenter that privilege by naming it explicitly and countering it in my methodology, my relationships with participants, and my knowledge generation through data analysis (e.g., Chacko, 2004; Faria & Mollett, 2014; Frankenberg, 1997; Gillborn, 2005; Lavadenz & Martin, 1997; Milner IV, 2007; Pennington & Prater, 2016; Vanner, 2015).

Thus, I committed to incorporating the Freirean (1993) concept of *praxis* into every stage of the study, seeking to reflect upon my positionality in ways that generate antiracist, counterhegemonic research actions (e.g., Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2011; Pennington & Prater, 2016; Vanner, 2015). Part of this commitment was reflected in my choice to prioritize the use of a decolonizing methodology, described further in the conceptual framework subsection of Chapter 2 and in the design and procedures section of Chapter 3.

Definition of Terms

Since Bakhtin (1981) reminded us that "language serves as the medium through which power gets enacted" (p. 469, as cited in Robinson, 2013), critical key terms and theories must be defined explicitly, to ensure intended meaning is communicated. The following six terms merit additional explanation as to their usage in this work: constructivist grounded theory (CGT), decolonizing methodology, genocide, peace education, postconflict, and structural violence.

Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT)

CGT, or *constructivist grounded theory* in longform, is an extension of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), in a manner similar to the branching out of critical pedagogy from the broader concept of critical theory. CGT has been delineated in a great detail by a wide variety of scholars, including, but not limited to, Albert, Mylopoulos, and Laberge (2018); Alemu, Stevens, Ross, and Chandler (2017); Charmaz (2014, 2017a/b); Kenny and Fourie (2015); Nagel, Burns, Tilley, and Aubin (2015); Ramalho, Adams, Huggard; and Hoare (2015), and Vanner (2015).

Most of the core elements of grounded theory utilized by researchers are also present in CGT methodology, such as (a) concurrent data collection and analysis; (b) comparison of data across and between sources; and (c) development of conclusions and theories that are empirically based versus imposing theory to fit the data.

The key difference in the research ethos of CGT is that it embraces researcher subjectivity and transparency about that subjectivity throughout the process of making meaning of the data (e.g., Charmaz, 2014, 2017a/b; Vanner, 2015). However, in order to ensure the accurate representation of study participants' voices, CGT encourages strategies such as member checks of interview transcripts and the use of direct quotes from interviewees.

Decolonizing Methodology

The choice to employ *decolonizing methodology* is more an ethos that a researcher brings to their project than a strict normative standard for the steps one must take in executing the study, and can be embraced in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods projects alike. It has been particularly espoused by Smith (2013) and Sandoval (2013), then later Brown and Strega (2015),

Falcón (2016), Pennington and Prater (2016), and Vanner (2015), especially for foreign research in the developing world.

The key feature of decolonizing methodology is that it seeks to destabilize and push back against phenomena that grant privileged status to some groups while keeping other voices on the margins, both in academia and in other arenas. Examples of perspectives that are too often amplified at the expense of others, and which are bolstered through generations of structural inequities, include Western countries and languages (English in particular), Whiteness, cis gender/heteronormative voices, maleness, and other asymmetric power dynamics.

The two primary ways to practice decolonizing methodology in the broadest sense include taking pains to be self-reflective about one's own positionality and inherent privilege, but even more so, building collaborative structures with individuals and communities in one's study.

Genocide

The most widely used definition of *genocide* is excerpted from the legal definition found in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)'s Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, approved in 1948:

> any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:
>
> - Killing members of the group,
> - Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group,
> - Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part,
> - Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group, and
> - Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group. (1948b, p. 280)

Peace Education

Although there are many explanations of what *peace education* is and what it entails, this study used the version that has been adapted from the United Nations Children's Fund and

expounded upon by Fountain (1999) to fit adult higher education environments. This study has already embraced Fountain's summation of peace education as quoted in Chapter 1, but he expounded on what it looks like in practice in the following way:

> Schooling and other educational initiatives that
> - Function as "zones of peace", where [students] are safe from conflict in the community;
> - Uphold [students'] basic rights as enumerated in the CRC [Convention on the Rights of the Child];
> - Develop a climate, within the school or other learning environment, that models peaceful and rights-respectful behaviour in relationships between all members of the school community . . .
> - Demonstrate the principles of equality and non-discrimination in administrative policies and practices;
> - Draw on the knowledge of peace-building that already exists in the community, including means of dealing with conflict that are effective, non-violent, and rooted in the local culture;
> - Handle conflicts . . . in a non-violent manner that respect the rights and dignity of all involved;
> - Integrate an understanding of peace, human rights, social justice and global issues throughout the curriculum whenever possible;
> - Provide a forum for the explicit discussion of values of peace and social justice;
> - Use teaching and learning methods that promote participation, cooperation, problem-solving and respect for differences;
> - Allow opportunities for [students] to put peace-making into practice, both in the educational setting and in the wider community; and
> - Generate opportunities for continuous reflection and professional development of all educators in relation to issues of peace, justice and rights. (1999, pp. 5-6)

Certainly, peace education, as both a comparatively new scholarly field of study and one that refers to a wide variety of practices, has many definitions, but after a review of the literature, I assert that Fountain's abovementioned articulation offers the clearest, most comprehensive perspective, and the definition most closely related to the specific aims of this piece.

Postconflict

In scholarly literature and development policy, the term *postconflict* describes a society in which "hot" violence (i.e., military or civilian fighting that leads to bodily injury, death and/or widespread destruction of property) has ceased, but which is still vulnerable to the risk of recurrent violence, economic stagnation, or both. Peace in societies designated as postconflict is often thought to be fragile, with nearly half of civil wars being attributable to relapse during postconflict periods (Collier, Hoeffler, & Söderbom, 2008).

Structural Violence

The phrase *structural violence* was first used in publication by Johan Galtung in 1969 and was developed to expand the notion of violence beyond doing physical harm or damage. Galtung (1969) instead asserted more broadly that

> violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations [and] defined as the cause of the difference between the potential and the actual, what could have been and what is. (p. 168)

It is important to note that Galtung used the phrase *structural violence* interchangeably with the phrase *social injustice* and the phrase *indirect violence*, but *structural violence* is the phrasing that has overwhelmingly been adopted in the literature on peace studies and peace education.

For a deeper discussion of structural violence as a foundational concept for this study and for the field of peace education, the reader may reference the Conceptual Framework section.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 provided topical and personal background on the study, in addition to delineating the problem the study sought to address. It also introduced three research questions, the purpose of the study and its significance to the field of peace education and beyond. Furthermore, the chapter explained the conceptual framework that informed the study's goals (alongside three themes to be covered in the review of discourse), followed by an overview of study methodology (including a plan of access and timing, limitations, delimitations, and assumptions, and positionality), and lastly, definition of relevant terms.

Immediately following will be Chapter 2, which consists of a review of discourse based on literature relevant to the study at hand, including three overarching themes: education's role

in fostering sustainable development and peace, the challenging Sub-Saharan African higher education context, and critical peace education as a constructive response to structural violence.

Chapter 3 then describes in detail the methodology that I utilized in seeking answers to the research questions posed earlier in this chapter. These details include participant recruitment and sampling, how I handled confidentiality and informed consent, a rationale for my chosen methodology, the process I undertook to secure approval to do foreign research, and my analytical plan for the data once it was collected.

Chapter 4 presents twelve key findings of the study, alongside participant demographic trends, insights from my field notes, and themes that emerged from interviews with faculty members, administrators, alumnae, GoR officials, and civil society leaders. This section relies heavily on the use of direct quotations from participants in order to craft a compelling narrative.

Chapter 5 concludes by offering critical analysis of the aforementioned twelve findings, followed by recommendations for both future research and policy. Appendices A through G and the list of References immediately follow this final chapter.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF DISCOURSE

This section is intentionally referred to as a review of *discourse* rather than review of *literature*, in order to highlight my choice to include not only peer-reviewed scholarly literature but also, policy-oriented documents and other sources apropos of my subject matter. To limit one's background study to only peer-reviewed scholarly literature (particularly the oft-chosen method students use whereby they only choose articles that are most cited) is to contribute, wittingly or not, to the hegemonic domination of Western voices in academic scholarship. Particularly in this study, I cast a wider net in order to ensure a greater variety of perspectives are included than those who have typically had the social and cultural capital to be "loudest" in the scholarly conversation.

With that ethical backdrop in mind, I now proceed to introduce the subject matter at hand, delineate the twin pillars of my conceptual framework, then provide a detailed review of discourse on three themes related to this study, as mapped to its three research questions.

The State of Peace Education

The goals outlined in Article 26:2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are actually quite helpful in understanding the foundational elements of what peace education is envisioned to be. The passage states that

> education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality, and for the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship between all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace. (UNGA, 1948a)

The Declaration has been ratified by nearly every nation. Thus, at least officially, most of the world claims to value peace education and by using the verb "shall" are essentially committing

themselves to enacting it. In some ways, this intention is coming to fruition. Human rights education (known as *HRE* and often considered a synonym for or subset of peace education) has been initiated in more than 90 countries (UNHCR, 2005 as cited in McGlynn, Zembylas, Bekerman, & Gallagher, 2009, p. 44).

Nonetheless, these initiatives are a drop in the bucket compared to prevailing traditional forms of education that "seem too often to focus on the activities of the powerful, wealthy, and elite and on the accomplishments of military leaders, ignoring the lives and contributions of ordinary citizens", whereas peace scholars Harris and Morrison (2003) have argued that "peace education must [instead] promote the view that the voices of the powerless must become part of the public debate" (p. 91). In fact, these scholars have even gone so far as to contend that "traditional education reproduces violent cultures . . . rather than focusing on attaining peace, these courses highlight existing political realities and social systems" (p. 31, 72).

Conceptual Framework

The two related issues of violent institutions and practices embedded within cultures alongside the need for researcher intentionality in implementing a decolonizing methodology to counter such practices were the two foci of this study's conceptual framework.

Structural Violence at the Root of Conflict

Gergen (1991) described the postmodern condition of humankind as "marked by a plurality of voices vying for the right to be reality – to be accepted as legitimate expressions of the true and the good" (p. 7). According to Lavadenz and Martin (1996), education has prioritized responding to such diversity "in ways that are authentic and effective" (p. 18) for more than three decades. However, even the best intentions of such education have often been

unsuccessful at rooting out the asymmetries of power that cause some to feel they are not part of what is "true" and "good" in the first place. Simply wishing away such inequities or spreading awareness of them does little to change forces already at work in human societies. As Snauwært (2011) pointed out, "human beings do not merely reproduce themselves biologically; we are cultural beings, and we therefore engage in cultural reproduction, attempting to reproduce what we believe is most valuable about our way of life" (p. 316).

As it happens, what we enact in practice is often quite different from what we claim to value. One of the greatest reasons for this cognitive dissonance is what Galtung (1969) famously termed *structural violence*, and addressing it is both one of the central aims and one of the primary contributions of peace education. The notion of structural violence is rooted in Galtung's complementary theories about negative versus positive peace. The former is merely the absence of war, or other "hot" violence that involves the inflicting of physical harm on other beings, whereas positive peace implies not only a nonviolent environment, but also the flourishing of other inclusive social values, such as justice, fairness, equity and parity, and democratic participation.

When there are systems or institutions in place that hinder these values, that prevent people from meeting basic needs, or that exploit, dehumanize or repress people from self-actualization in its many forms, Galtung (1969) would consider these elements to be structural violence. He argued that structural violence "amounts to no less suffering than personal violence" (p. 173) and expounded on six important dimensions of structural violence in his work, including the following:

- It can include *psychological tolls*, not merely physical (i.e., the physical strain of being put in chains versus the mental strain of uneven access to transportation among the poor, for example).
- Structural violence can include not only negative forms of *influencing others*, but positive forms that are nonetheless manipulative and laden with consequences (i.e., the rewards of consumerism).
- It need not include *direct harm* to any one individual, or in other words, it need not have any direct object (i.e., the Cold War and the constant threat of nuclear annihilation could be considered structural violence).
- Similarly, structural violence need not be perpetrated by any individual, or have any *direct subject* solely responsible and is often related to the unequal distribution of power, resources, and the accompanying consequences (i.e., the perpetuation of systemic racism in a society like the United States, where the majority of citizens likely do not consider themselves racist). Galtung (1969) stressed repeatedly that the important point is that if people are starving when it is objectively avoidable, then violence is committed, regardless of whether there is a clear subject-action-object relation, as in the way world economic relationships are organized today (p. 171).
- Structural violence captures both intended and unintended violence, noting that the attribution of guilt and responsibility involves not only intention, but consequences.

- It distinguishes between manifest versus latent violence, meaning that structural violence is present in situations where tension is running so high that even slight challenges could easily turn into physical violence (i.e., the community interactions preceding the Los Angeles race riots). (Galtung, 1969)

Elements of structural violence, then, can be far more insidious and hence, require far more nuanced and sophisticated approaches to better understand and contend with their impact than violence as we traditionally conceive of it.

In short, from Galtung's perspective, force alone can never solve or (in many cases) even scratch the surface of most forms of structural violence. Freire (1993) concurred with the theory of structural violence, although he worded it slightly differently, stating that

> Any situation in which "A" objectively exploits "B" or hinders his and her pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person is one of oppression. Such a situation in itself constitutes violence. . . . [thus], with the establishment of a relationship of oppression, violence has already begun. (p. 55)

What is especially important to note here, however, is peace education's unique perspective on structural violence, namely that the inequities and human tragedies that arise from it are not natural (as people are often inclined to conclude about phenomena like poverty and disease).

Rather, they are correlated directly with actions we do or do not take as decision makers. Thus, peace education prioritizes the agency of human beings and the malleability of cultures and systems. Even Freire supported this notion and deplored its opposite pole. In his 1993 seminal piece, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, he described what he termed the *banking* concept of education, which he characterized as a relationship between the teacher as narrating Subject and students as listening Objects, no more than "containers" to be "filled" by the teacher. Freire (1993) concluded that "education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are

the depositaries and the teacher is the depositor" (p. 71-72), a situation that he advised all educators—and peace educators in particular—should actively work to avoid.

Modern peace educators and scholars agree with Galtung and Freire's nuanced ideas of what constitutes violence. Harris and Morrison (2003), for example, argued that violence

> can imply more than a direct, physical confrontation. It is expressed not only on battlefields, but also, through circumstances that limit life, civil rights, health, personal freedom, and self- fulfillment . . . when wealth and power exploit or oppress others, and standards for justice are not upheld. (p. 12)

McGlynn, Zembylas, Bekerman, and Gallagher (2009) claimed that the fundamental dilemma for peace education programs in societies where such conditions are present are the related questions of "how can identities attuned to peaceful coexistence be cultivated in the context of an ongoing intractable conflict? . . . Is it possible to educate for coexistence in the absence of policies that support peace?" (p. 127). These researchers are among many who have insisted that without such supportive policies that counter structural violence, peace education's effectiveness can be akin to pouring water into a bucket with holes.

I would argue that even those who are primarily interested in phenomena that *are* forms of direct violence, such as genocide, domestic violence, etc., would do well to consider structural violence a high priority for study because even topics that discuss explicit, physical violence nearly always have structural violence under the surface as root causes.

The reader may be familiar with Allport's contact hypothesis (1954), which posited that in cases where intergroup conflict is present, substantive contact between individuals who are members of those groups is the most effective means of reducing prejudice, stereotype and general tension. However, when examined through the lens of structural violence, a more

complex picture emerges; admittedly, individuals fuel the flames of conflict, but there are more powerful material and institutional origins driving individual behavior (McGlynn et al., 2009).

Paul Farmer, an anthropologist, physician and advocate for the poor, agreed that there can be no honest assessment of the current state of human rights without a consideration of structural violence (Farmer, 2003, p. 385). His work highlighted examples related to HIV/AIDS that are instructive here as well. Domestically, he argued that American women are at greater risk for contracting the disease "not because they are African American or speak Spanish; women are at risk because poverty is the primary and determining condition of their lives" (Farmer, 2003, p. 380). The situation is no less bleak for men; according to Farmer, African American men in Harlem have shorter life expectancies than Bangladeshi men (McCord & Freeman, 1990 as cited in Farmer, 2003, p. 381).

Thus, because dire poverty and its consequences for access to healthcare, education about disease, etc., are the underlying reason for such high mortality and illness rates in these disadvantaged populations, we may well concede that it is not *physical* violence causing the suffering of the aforementioned victims, but rather *structural* violence. Even the World Health Organization has acknowledged for over 15 years that poverty is the world's greatest killer—not war, homicide, any one disease, or even vehicular accidents (Farmer, 2003, p. 383).

With this statistic in mind, Farmer also considered the international context of HIV/AIDS, which only further underscores the insidious nature of structural violence. Take the example of Haiti, where in 2017, the life expectancy at birth was only 64 years of age (World Bank, 2019). In struggling to make sense of how this bleak reality could be, Farmer offered stories of individuals that illuminate broader societal trends. These particularly include

government intimidation and expansion of infrastructure that supplants families and causes sudden poverty, but the structural violence cascade does not stop there. The attendant desperation of women in particular leads them to feel forced to seek protection from the only men with any secure income, namely soldiers. These men were widely reputed to have multiple partners and have spread HIV/AIDS to many of their sexual partners, unbeknownst to the women until it was too late. Their eventual, often inescapable death from the diseases caused unspeakable grief for their families and many suicides of family members have resulted.

Farmer reflected that each of these events involve some constraint of agency, with the most disturbing comment being that the women who suffer and die from HIV/AIDS are so constrained by circumstances that one can hardly call the relationships preceding their illness "consensual" sex. Clearly, none of these consequences result from direct physical violence, but all cause incalculable suffering. The magnitude of this kind of suffering often confounds those who would seek to study or understand it (part of why it can be difficult to teach!). Farmer (2003) suggested at least three reasons for this difficulty:

> "exoticization" of suffering, [i.e.,] the suffering of those who are "remote", whether because of geography or culture, is often less affecting. . . . [secondly] the sheer weight of the suffering makes it all the more difficult to render. . . . [and thirdly] the dynamics and distribution of suffering are still poorly understood. (pp. 377-378)

It seems likely that each of these reasons would resonate with the average person who is exposed to violence and death in the media and feels at a loss for how to respond. This supposition is likely particularly true for the most advantaged and affluent in society, for whom "the suffering of the world's poor intrudes only rarely into the consciousness" (Farmer, 2003, p. 370).

Academics experience confusion for similar reasons; Rebecca Chopp, in *The Praxis of Suffering* confirmed that "events of massive, public suffering deny quantitative analysis" (p. 378,

as cited in Farmer, 2003). Many civic and religious leaders express extremely strong criticism for this situation as it presently stands. For example, Chilean theologian Pablo Richard emphasized that "a wall between the rich and the poor is being built, so that poverty does not annoy the powerful and the poor are obliged to die in the silence of history" (p. 384, as cited in Farmer, 2003). Although it is overwhelming to think too long about such widespread tragedy, scholarly conversation often returns to the heartening truth that concerned individuals and organizations have been seeking, slowly but surely, to address the structural violence underlying these issues.

Development theorist Amartya Sen (1998) has cited many examples where such active problem solving is sorely needed, including public health services, educational facilities, hazards of urban life and "other social and economic parameters that influence survival chances" (p. 381, as cited in Farmer, 2003). More broadly, students who are new to the subject of structural violence will find that the point of such study is ultimately "to call for more fine-grained, more systemic analyses of power and privilege in discussions about who is likely to have their rights violated and how" (Farmer, 2003, p. 382).

Thus, the study of structural violence is morally charged and implies the need for education that leads to action. However, education itself is not immune from structural violence. On the contrary, Harris and Morrison (2003) contend that "schools, rather than ameliorating the class divisions which cause structural violence, replicate and reinforce those divisions" (p. 87).

The faulty notion that education is somehow neutral is partially the reason (Freire, 1993). Although it can pretend to be so by "tak[ing] an 'objective' stance toward the present social realities within which it takes place, . . . it has the inevitable consequence of fitting people into those social realities as they presently exist" (Groome, 1983, p. 166, as cited in Harris &

Morrison, 2003). One way in which this phenomenon has played out in practice is in the selection of curriculum content; one extremely subtle form of structural violence has been in the insistence of many institutions on only exposing students to the "classics". Kincheloe, Slattery, and Steinberg (2000) argued that what academics may see as "tradition" has in fact been formed "by those with the power and influence to create it" (p. 319). What gets left unconsidered much of the time is what Kincheloe et al. (2000) call the *null curriculum*—"those authors, ideas, topics, and issues that go undiscussed" (p. 324)—which is usually populated by scholars who are themselves marginalized or whose ideas challenge the status quo.

Countering Structural Violence with Decolonizing Methodology

Acknowledging that education itself is an institution impacted by structural violence leads us to the second concept undergirding this study. Specifically, I posit that educational research is at risk of further entrenching structurally violent norms in research settings unless researchers choose with ethical intention a methodology that counters that impact.

In my case, I chose decolonizing methodology, as espoused by Smith (2013) and Vanner (2015), among others, which I explain further in this section as a theory and elucidate as a practice in Chapter 3. "Decoloniality", as Smith (2013) called it, is explicated further by Falcón (2016), who expounded upon the concept by arguing that decoloniality

> requires that scholars destabilize dynamics that, for instance, privilege English, liberalism, the global North, and so-called objectivist scientific modes of knowledge production. . . . the aim of decolonizing research then is to create new research models and practices. (p. 176)

The exciting possibility of useful models and practices emerging from this study was particularly compelling to me and was yet another reason I was drawn to decolonizing methodology as a conceptual framework for this work.

Numerous scholars have corroborated my emphasis on using research methodology to challenge the status quo and have expressed concern that such practice is not more widespread in scholarship. For example, Falcón (2016) lamented the fact that "academic-based ethical norms do not account for the social structural violence that research has inflicted on the communities under study. . . . Thus, it is incumbent upon transnational feminist researchers to be reflective and generative" (p. 182).

Notice that this admonition was particularly directed at scholars doing research in foreign countries; I would argue that it is even more urgent for those researchers (like myself) doing projects in non-Western, developing countries. As Vanner (2015) pointed out, "the Western researcher represents not only a colonialist past, but a neocolonialist present" (p. 1). Indeed, as I explained in the positionality section of Chapter 1, there are numerous ways in which academic standards of the West dominate and constrict African higher education.

However, Vanner (2015) asserted that this dilemma does not mean that Western researchers should simply avoid such contexts because such willful distancing of ourselves only serves to "reflect and reproduce [our] privileged position without drawing attention to or challenging unequal and oppressive structures" (p. 2). Considering this reality is what led me to conclude that I would be doing a disservice to the M.A. program by attempting to tell its story without placing it in context, in terms of scholarly power relations at large, and without parallel analysis of my own place in the research power structure as the study unfolds.

This need for "critical consciousness" on my part about both myself and the program has been bolstered consistently in academic conversation on ethical research practices (e.g., Gubrium & Holstein, 2000; Muhammed et al., 2014; Pennington & Prater, 2016). In fact, Pennington and

Prater (2016) outlined specific actions a critically conscious researcher seeking to implement decolonizing methodology would perform in practice: such scholars would "seek to recognize and reject their historical privileges, review and reconfigure their positioning, critically describe and disrupt the social organizations they inhabit, and critically deconstruct familiar social types in the figured worlds of research" (p. 921).

However, the primary emphasis of decolonizing methodology is not so much focused on individual confession and recognition of privilege (though that is part of it), but rather the building of collaborative structures that undermine that institutionalized privilege (Falcón, 2016). As I have noted, even with stellar strategic planning, outside funding and other resources, African higher education structures are inherently challenged by factors that simply do not apply to American academia. Thus, in implementing decolonizing methodology in Rwanda, I echo Vanner's sentiments about her research ethos in the developing world – "for me, it is essential to contribute to the empowerment of those disadvantaged by the same systems that have advantaged me" (2015, p. 2).

Summary

These two related thematic areas of structural violence at the root of all conflict and decolonizing methodology as an academic counter to structural violence provided the backdrop, the assumptions and the motivators for my research questions, the social justice ethos, and the methodological design of my study.

Review of Discourse in Three Themes

Three broad themes emerged that were especially pertinent in conducting a thorough review of the existing literature. These themes included the following:

1. Higher education is integral to sustainable development and peace, especially in postconflict countries (e.g., Hurtado, 2007; McLean Hilker, 2009; Turner Johnson & Kamaara, 2014).
2. There are unique structural challenges for higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g., Assié-Lumumba, 2006; Gyimah-Brempong et al., 2006; Mama, 2006; Ng'ethe, 2003; O'Hara, 2010; Sawyerr, 2004; Shabani, 1998; Teferra & Altbach, 2003; Tettey, 2006).
3. Critical peace education offers a constructive response to structural violence (e.g., Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2011; Freire, 1993; Hantzopoulos, 2011; Kester & Booth, 2010; Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 2009; Snauwært, 2011).

These three themes emerged directly from the research questions, elucidated in Figure 1 below:

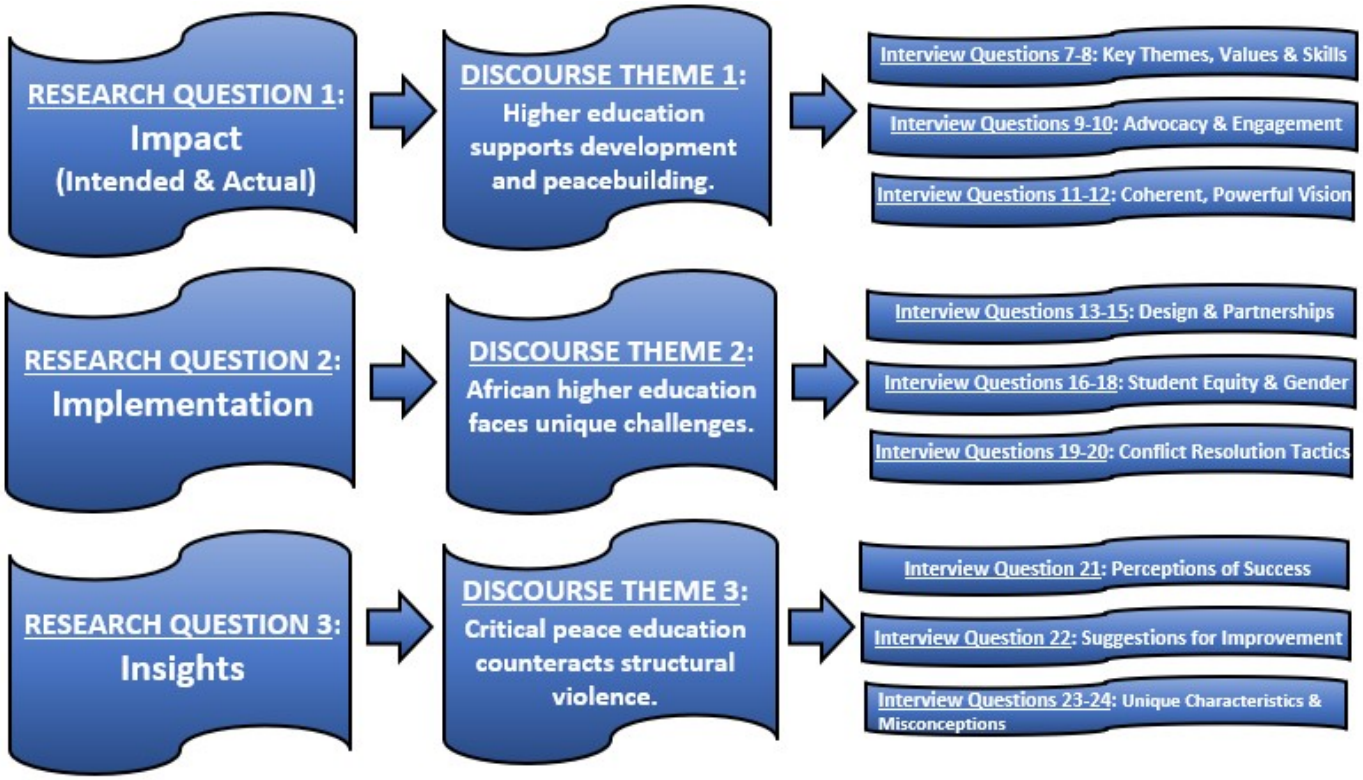

Figure 1. Alignment of research questions to discourse themes to interview questions.

The remainder of this section will illuminate in further detail these three themes in the global scholarly and practitioner-oriented discourse.

Higher Education as Integral to Sustainable Development and Peace

After decades of being systematically deprioritized, higher education is now considered a key factor in the development process. The revised World Bank Rate of Return on Education (RORE) calculations corroborated the conclusion that today's world requires the technical and leadership skills higher education provides, both for individual success and for the success of communities at every level. In fact, World Bank documentation reported that a mere one-year increase in average higher education levels would result in GDP per capita growth of 12%, as well as 0.39 percentage points (Yusuf et al., 2009, p. xxi).

Moja (2004) explained that "knowledge has become the primary resource in advanced economies. . . . There is thus an overall pressure on higher education to play a role as an engine of development" (p. 22). In fact, there is no high-income country but Switzerland that has a university enrollment rate of less than 50% (Harvard Higher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa Project, 2007). Saint (2009) argued that "from this perspective, higher education expenditures can now be justified as strategic investments in human capital formation that boost productivity and enhance national economic competitiveness" (p. 14).

Furthermore, study after study has confirmed that nations at every level of development that invest in strong higher education system experience myriad other "spillover effect" benefits, including decreased vulnerability to world price fluctuation, increased entrepreneurship and job creation, stronger rule of law and lessened crime/corruption, a better informed and politically active citizenry, reduced likelihood of dependence on public welfare benefits, decreased ethnic

tension, improved health and life expectancy and even higher rates of participation in hobbies and leisure activities, to name just a few (e.g., Bloom, Hartley, & Rosovsky, 2006; Bloom & Rosovsky, 2011; Bollag, 2003; Britz et al., 2006; HECB, 2010; Mbeki, 1998; Putnam, 2001; Reisberg & Watson, 2011; Reynolds, Bygrave, & Autio, 2003; Saint, 2009; Schuller, Preston, Hammond, Brassett-Grundy, & Bynner, 2004; UNESCO, 2009).

Despite the overwhelming benefits of a strong higher education system, progress towards this goal has been extremely uneven both between countries and within countries, often limited by continued inequity among different groups, a problem that is (again) all the more exacerbated in developing countries. Whereas more than 85% of the global population resides in low- or middle-income countries, their contribution to the sum total of all students in higher education is only about 50% (Bloom & Rosovsky, 2011, p. 72).

Challenges of achieving higher education equity. Lolwana (2010) pointed out poignantly that in a world with such stark income and wealth gaps, "education might just be the only currency that can be distributed in order to improve equity in a given society" (p. 2). However, some scholars have concluded that the expansion of higher education tends to serve as a process of *diversion*, especially in the neoliberal context that tends to push public higher education towards employment-oriented pathways more than traditional liberal arts curricula. Arum, Gamoran, and Shavit (2010) argued that this trend towards vocational education can result in students from lower socioeconomic levels being funneled into positions of ultimately lower status, though in the bigger picture, even "lower tier" opportunities can serve to expand educational *inclusion*.

Regardless, institutions seeking to widen access must often contend with the formidable challenge of overcoming the accumulative disadvantages incurred by the more vulnerable students they seek to integrate. They may need to bear in mind the "deficiencies and disadvantages that have accumulated over years of schooling if [the] targeted populations are to be integrated successfully at the university level [and] countries cannot implement universal solutions" (Reisberg & Watson, 2011, p. 191).

It may be that this conundrum is unavoidable as higher education becomes within reach of a broader swath of the population. Usher (2009) reasoned that

> as one passes 50%, to continue to increase participation means to involve people who are below the median in terms of academic achievement and these people tend to come from society's more disadvantaged groups who have always been less likely to attend postsecondary education. (p. 200, as cited in Reisberg & Watson, 2011)

Thus, developing countries expanding higher education access must nearly always contend with the tradeoff of quality versus quantity.

The Unique Context of Higher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa

In 2015, the United Nations marked its deadline year for the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were developed in the year 2000 and have been widely referenced since that time, particularly in policy circles, and revised to become the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is no accident that the second of the eight goals considered integral to sustainable development worldwide is to "achieve universal primary education", immediately following the goal "to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger" (UNSG, 2000).

These goals and the assumed link between them are in keeping with the far greater emphasis that has been historically placed on increasing access to primary education in the developing world, without similar attention to what follows, particularly higher education.

Nowhere has this trend been more consistent or more consequential than in Sub-Saharan Africa, with particular detriment to women.

The World Bank in particular, as a major funder of African education during the Structural Adjustment period in the 1980s, chose to systematically deprioritize investment in higher education. Instead, universal primary education was emphasized, largely because at the time there was a widespread belief that the RORE (Rate of Return on Education) for primary education was higher than that of either secondary or tertiary education, a hypothesis that has since been widely discredited (Bloom & Rosovsky, 2011; Colclough, Kingdon, & Patrinos, 2009; Moja, 2004; Tiyambe Zeleza & Olukoshi, 2004).

Closer to the turn of the millennium, this viewpoint was reexamined from a funding standpoint and the World Bank shifted some of its attention towards fixing the decaying university systems in Africa. Reports from that decade acknowledged that "neglecting tertiary education could seriously jeopardize Sub-Saharan Africa's long-term growth prospects, and slow progress towards Millennium Development Goals, many of which require tertiary training to implement" (Yusuf et al., 2009, p. xxiii.).

Numerous other scholars contributed to a growing consensus that being part of the modern knowledge economy and having a thriving higher education sector are inextricably linked (e.g., Gebremariam, 2001; Hopper, 2002; Lolwana, 2010; Saint, 2009; Teferra, 2009). However, by that time, a great deal of damage had already been done to African higher education in the form of defunding, contraction of faculty numbers and significant weakening of incentives offered to faculty members and administrators (Yusuf et al., 2009).

By the mid-1990s, a young African was 17 times less likely to receive higher education than a student in an industrialized country (Hoffman, 1995-1996, p. 84). African governments had not been at liberty to accept funds from the World Bank without agreeing to draconian spending cuts and dramatic budget shifts. For universities that received the bulk of their funding from their governments at that time, limited resources meant constricted mandates, both in terms of who was served and how well.

One of the consequences of this structural decay has been the alienation of African universities from the rest of the academic world, and this at a time when one of the biggest trends in higher education worldwide is internationalization and the forging of foreign partnerships. As a reaction to the weakened universities available in-country, many African students and scholars with the means to do so went abroad instead, sparking what has become notoriously known as the *brain drain*.

Relatedly, women's human capital has been and continues to be far scarcer than that of men in developing countries. Because women in these countries face unequal access to higher education, their departure may actually result in a greater relative loss to their countries of origin. However, those without the ability to seek higher education elsewhere—more often women than men—often languished without nearly as many opportunities for academic or professional growth. As international higher education expert Philip Altbach (1998) has argued, "the professoriate in the developing countries is a profession on the periphery" (p. 207, as cited in Altbach, 2011), and such marginalization is even truer for female academics.

African universities in a state of crisis. One of the key consequences of poverty, especially the extreme poverty that continues to plague the African continent, has been exclusion

from the process of economic development (Abdi, Puplampu, & Sefa Dei, 2006). Such exclusion is very common in the region; indeed, 33 of the world's 47 least developed countries (LDCs) are in Africa (UN, 2018a). Furthermore, as of 2019, not one of Sub-Saharan Africa's more than 50 countries had earned a place among the world's top 15 innovation "hot spots" (Rice, 2019).

Thus, given our earlier discussion of the correlation between higher education and economic growth, it should come as no surprise that participation in higher education is dramatically lower in Africa than elsewhere. Whereas average rates of participation in higher education are currently nearly 38% worldwide, and specifically at 73% in Europe and 87% in North America, in stark contrast, the participation rate in Sub-Saharan Africa is at only 9% (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2018). This statistic represents only a 3% increase over 10 years for the region, even with greater increases in gross student enrollments than any other region (Morley, Leach, & Lugg, 2008).

However, such high demand has come at a heavy price, both financially and otherwise: the average annual cost to attend university in Africa in 2007 was 170% of per capita income, as compared to 65% for private universities in the United States and only 20% for public universities (Harvard Higher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa Project, 2007), and this gap has only continued to grow. This trend is in spite of incredibly low-quality schools, compared to what students in more developed countries would have access to, including the United States. In fact, as of 2019, no Sub-Saharan African university was ranked in the top 150 universities worldwide (Times Higher Education, 2019).

Research capability is particularly dire in African universities; the continent ranks last in the world in total contribution to world research at only 0.2% (Hoffman, 1995-1996). This sad

statistic is undoubtedly related to the discrepancy in what African countries spend on research investment (as little as 1% of their GDP) as compared to most Western governments (upwards of 20%) (p. 85). Furthermore, even what research exists in Africa has tended to be concentrated largely in South Africa, which hosts more than 60% of the continent's research and development activity, whereas in the greater Congo Basin, there is "virtually no science at all" (Britz et al., 2006, p. 18).

Thus, any students or academics wishing to pursue serious research have been all but forced to go elsewhere; this situation has contributed to the African Union findings that of 150 million migrants in the world, fully one-third are African (Black, 2006, p. 112). More specifically, in 1987, 30% of Africa's skilled workforce was already living in Europe and by the 1990s, more than 5% of *all* Africans were estimated to be living abroad (Adamson, 2006, p. 187). The percentage is almost three times that high for migrants who have some higher education (Hoffman, 1995-1996, p. 86). The 2005 Commission for Africa Report estimated that more African scientists and engineers are working in the United States than in the whole of Africa (p. 19, as cited in Britz et al., 2006).

Additionally, academics face many conditions that lead them to feel devalued. They are often paid so little (if paid on a regular basis at all) that many are forced to seek second jobs doing menial work such as driving taxis, while at their institutions they face unreasonably high student-teacher ratios that make it near impossible for them to carve out time for additional research. As a result, Africa also suffers an "internal brain drain whereby professors and researchers leave their faculty positions for more lucrative posts in the private sector, in international organisations or domestic political posts" (Assié-Lumumba, 2006, p. 126). Thus,

between internal/external migration and funding constraints, there is no question that African universities find themselves severely constricted.

In a poignant insight as timely today as it was more than 20 years ago, Atteh (1996) suggested that the state of African universities is "a reflection of the lack of education among Africa's tyrannical rulers, hence the low appreciation of education" (p. 36). This possibility is supported by other data: compared to spending on basic human needs, such as health, shelter and, of course, education, military expenditures have increased at a far faster rate (Atteh, 1996, p. 36).

Even if there were spending on these critical sectors, there would still be a severe shortage of professionals, scholars and technicians who are skilled enough to guide their nations through the challenges they face (Hoffman, 1995-1996, p. 83). Without a growing base of strong leaders who have been trained in rigorous, interdisciplinary fashion, many African countries will continue to experience vacuums of power that will likely continue to be filled by those with the force to consolidate and exploit power. Thus, the very development process has been and could continue to be hindered by the absence of excellent higher education institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa (Turner Johnson & Kamaara, 2014).

Clancy's six-person team of scholar colleagues (2007) emphasized that "what's important for African countries is to understand the relationship of primary, secondary, and tertiary education systems; when one level expands, increased inequality can be expected on the next level" (p. 7). We know from examining the K16 educational pipeline in Sub-Saharan Africa that only one in four or five African students completes secondary education (Bregman, 2008).

Lolwana (2010) further noted that poorer students are far less likely to matriculate to higher education, given that they have had weaker preparation in under-resourced public schools and therefore find their only choice is unregulated (often lesser quality), private higher education. Moja (2004) added that although private universities are much pricier than public institutions, both types of schools are becoming more expensive (and thus more onerous for students) all the time because the World Bank and other multilateral institutions increasingly stress policy that urges stretched institutions to introduce cost-sharing measures, such as user fees. Under these conditions, Brossard and Foko (2007) found that that a student from the lowest socioeconomic quintile is 15 times less likely to enter university than one from the highest quintile (p .71, as cited in Yusuf et al., 2009).

This discrepancy is troubling because maintaining genuine socioeconomic (and cultural) diversity at the university level is critical, especially for African countries with "heterogeneous ethnic and religious groupings and a lack of well-established national identities [in which] informal ties developed through higher education could be extremely important for national stability, hence economic growth" (Gyimah-Brempong et al., 2006, p. 525).

Amidst such discouraging information about African higher education systems, it is critical to point out that Africa suffers from enough overgeneralization in nearly every other arena that to do so in this case—assigning all the continent's universities to irresolvable decline—would be a disservice to the serious study of comparative education. Furthermore, optimism and proactive policymaking towards African universities are critical, because as Assié-Lumumba (2006) has reminded us, only these institutions are poised to "creat[e] the human resources capable of making the right decisions for Africa's interests" (p. 134).

Gendered differences in African higher education experience. Although women outnumber men today in higher education in many regions, including Europe, North America, Latin America, the Caribbean and (soon) the Arab states (Chien, 2014), women are still underrepresented in Sub-Saharan African institutions. In both East Africa and West Africa, on average females constitute between 33-40% of total university enrollment, with even greater disparity in their matriculation to tertiary STEM programs (e.g., Lolwana, 2010; Morley et al., 2008; Oanda, Chege, & Wesonga, 2008). Again, the problem begins earlier in the K16 pipeline: with the exception of Kenya and Nigeria, most countries have female matriculation rates to secondary school of less than 50% (Lolwana, 2010).

Even with affirmative action policies in place in many countries and a proliferation of more institutions to choose from, studies have demonstrated that these responses have not removed many of the gendered barriers to participation and that higher education "remains [largely] restricted to those who can afford the rising costs" (Morley et al., 2008, p. 70). Lolwana (2010) concluded that "treating women as a seamless category ends up giving women from higher socio-economic backgrounds enhanced chances of accessing higher education while widening the gap for women from poor socio-economic backgrounds" (p. 84).

These gender inequities are especially poignant considering widespread agreement among scholars and practitioners that "investment in girls' education may well be the highest-return investment available in the developing world" (Lawrence Summers, former World Bank Chief Economist, as cited in Kristoff & WuDunn, 2009, p. xx). Similarly, both UNICEF and UNDP have issued major reports arguing that gender equality yields a "double dividend" by

elevating not only women themselves, but also their children and communities (Kristof & WuDunn, 2009, p. xx).

Not only are female students underrepresented at African universities, but also women in academic leadership roles, both instructional and administrative—an equity gap that includes Rwanda (Randell, 2013). The issue of gender equity is a subtopic this study will seek to investigate as it chronicles the development and priorities of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program.

Critical Peace Education as a Constructive Response to Structural Violence

For a deeper understanding of the study that follows, it is important to review what peace education is and aims to be, both in general as a field and specifically at the tertiary level at universities and colleges, as well as what its priorities and pedagogies consist of.

Pedagogies of peace education. Snauwært's research (2011) posited that there have historically been three different paradigms in approaching the practice of peace education: the reform, reconstruction, and critical transformational approaches (p. 328). The first, reform, is focused primarily on the achievement of negative peace, which includes such aims such as preventing and ending war and détente. The second approach, reconstruction, offers a more holistic approach, including a reimagining of international structures with the goal of total disarmament, and the development of new international structures for peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and peacebuilding. However, the third approach of transformation casts the widest net, by interrogating all forms of violence and injustice, including structural (Snauwært, 2011).

As might be expected, these three approaches to peace education reform also inform three different pedagogies. Both the reform and reconstruction approaches typically emphasized a

more recognizable power structure of the teacher as authority, delivering information or skills to students; by contrast, the transformational approach, as an inherent part of its goals, emphasized a pedagogy that

> elicits learning and develops the capacity of critical, ethical, and contemplative reflective inquiry . . . that is process-oriented, inquiry-based, reflective, experiential, dialogical/conversational, value-based, imaginative, critical, liberating, and empowering. (Snauwært, 2011, p. 329; See also Ashton, 2007; Kester & Booth, 2010; Lantieri & Patti, 1996; Reardon, 1999, 2011; Reardon & Cabezudo, 2002; Reardon & Snauwært, 2011)

Consequently, peace education heavily stresses the importance of connecting theory with practice and immersing students in experiential learning opportunities that will both enhance their knowledge of the structures of oppressions and result in affective engagement (e.g., Bing, 1989; Coy & Hancock, 2010; Conley-Taylor & Bretherton, 2006; Folk, 1978; Hedeen & Coy, 1996; Weigert, 1990).

Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, peace education shares many values in common with other forms of liberatory education designed to deal more constructively with diversity among people, including:

- **antiracist/bias education**, which seeks to locate and disempower examples of prejudice and discriminating in the classroom (Lavadenz & Martin, 1996, p. 22),
- **constructivist education**, which stresses that all true learning takes place in social and collaborative contexts and teachers are more mediators of learning than final authorities (e.g., Dewey, 1916; Harris & Graham, 1994; Poplin, 1988; Vygotskii, 1978), and also including (but not limited to)
- **global education/international education**, which expands curricular emphasis beyond local and national issues to include broader coverage of what happens in other

countries, including the overarching lesson that what happens "there" matters "here" (Lavadenz & Martin, 1996, p. 26)

Lastly, peace education pedagogy typically (and ideally) employs a collaborative, democratic learning environment that mirrors the kind of world it normatively advocates for, while also developing empathy skills in students and teacher alike.

Peace educators similarly share an emphasis with Freire (1993) on dialogue as a vehicle for seeing power dynamics at work in education and the broader world with new eyes and, thus, becoming increasingly able to disrupt and rearrange them. (Kester & Booth, 2010). Aronson (2000) eloquently summarized this phenomenon by observing that:

> You don't get students from diverse backgrounds to appreciate one another by telling them that prejudice and discrimination are bad things. You get them to appreciate one another by placing them in situations where they interact with one another in a structure designed to allow everyone's basic humanity to shine through. (p. 171; see also Bickmore, 2002; Greene, 1998)

Critical pedagogy in peace education. It is no coincidence that the above representations of what matters most in peace education will sound familiar to Freirean scholars. Indeed, peace education pedagogy at its best overlaps a great deal with critical pedagogy (e.g., Bajaj, 2008; Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2011; Hantzopoulos, 2011; Reardon, 2009), which holds in highest priority "that all students develop the critical capacities to reflect, critique, and act to transform the conditions under which they live" (Darder, 2012, p. xx).

In many ways, the two are inextricable; one cannot fully achieve the aims of peace education without practicing it with critical pedagogy, while critical pedagogy seeks the same ends as peace education, but in many other arenas where it is practiced as well. Freire (1993) characterized the classroom or community education environment created by critical pedagogy as one that utilizes a *problem-posing* approach, that seeks in other words not merely to describe

what is, but to investigate what could be, and what forms of reinvention, restructuring or even revolutionary change would have to take place for such a shift to occur.

In so doing, critical pedagogy encourages students and teachers towards what Freire (1993) called *conscientização*—i.e., the emergence of critical consciousness and critical intervention in reality (p. 35). When peace education encourages classrooms in this way, it is deservedly referred to as critical peace education, a subfield within peace education that very intentionally incorporates the principles of critical pedagogy.

These and other tenets of Freire's framework of critical pedagogy have had a remarkable influence on both theory and practice in peace education (e.g., Bajaj, 2008; Freire, 1973, 1976, 1993, 1994, 1998; Hantzopoulos, 2011; Reardon, 1999, 2009, 2011; Reardon & Snauwært, 2011; Rivage-Seul & Rivage-Seul, 1994; all cited in Snauwært, 2011, p. 315). Freire himself was well aware of this influence and in his acceptance speech for the 1986 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Prize in Peace Education, actually offered a challenge to practitioners and colleagues about the failure to place critiques of power as top priority in peace education (Kester & Booth, 2010, p. 499).

Freire (1993) offered useful insight into the process of inspiring students to action via the educational process. He claimed that "as they are increasingly posed with problems…gradually the students come to regard themselves as committed, . . . for whom looking at the past must only be a means of understanding more clearly what and whom they are so that they can more wisely build the future" (p. 81).

That being the case, what kind of teachers should peace educators seek to be? What sorts of qualities contribute to their efficacy? Harris and Morrison (2003) asserted that they must be

able to facilitate discussion, to guide students towards consensual decisions, to manage organizations, to respond to conflict, to collaborate on finding solutions to problems, to foster attitudes of openness among students and to motivate others (p. 94).

The common thread in all of these traits involve a sense of humility in working with other human beings capable of learning beyond what the teacher can plan for, rather than acting as an all-powerful leader. Jonassen, Howland, Marra, and Crismond (2008) confirmed this need, asserting that teachers must release part of their authority over students, that "if teachers determine what is important for students to know, how they should know it, and how they should learn it, then students cannot become intentional, constructive learners" (p. vii).

Dewey (1923) suggested a perspective that offers me very useful insight. He succinctly says that "the teacher is not in the school to impose certain ideas or to form certain habits in the child, but is there as a member of the community to select the influences which shall affect the child and to assist him in properly responding to these influences" (p. 6).

Critical peace education as a particular subset of peace education has both rich philosophical underpinnings and well-developed practical grounding. It is connected with the idea that social justice is achieved when it is focused on enhancing individuals' abilities to be and do what they freely choose and to ensure they have such choices available to them. The notion that these are the foundational tenets of what it means to achieve justice in society also carries with it a moral imperative and hope that institutions can change for the better.

According to prominent peace studies scholar Snauwært (2011), these ideas are best encapsulated by Sen's (2009) and Nussbaum's (2000) conception of social justice as *realizations-focused* and *capabilities-oriented* (p. 315). Snauwært (2011) also connected these

ideas to Erich Fromm's (1976) Humanist philosophy that the very roots of language across the world center on the verbs "to be" and "to have", which "represent the basic dimensions of our existence: having and being. . . . They constitute two different orientations toward the self and the world" (p. 216). Thus, the expansion of human agency and choice about who to be and how to spend our lives are central to the notion of peace and social justice.

Similarly, critical peace education is grounded practically in Freire's (1993) principles of *critical pedagogy*, in that many of the practices encouraged by critical pedagogy—dialogue, praxis, *conscientization*, and cultural responsiveness, to name a few—are also heavily prioritized in a peace studies classroom (e.g., Bajaj, 2008; Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2011; Hantzopoulos, 2011; Kester & Booth, 2010; Snauwært, 2011).

In fact, Snauwært (2011) asserted that critical peace education does indeed need stronger foundational bases, and that Freire's conception of critical pedagogy is a promising start, in that it has already deeply influenced peace education as a field and a practice. For example, Reardon (2009) stated that "critical pedagogy is the methodology most consistent with the transformative goals of peace education and human rights learning . . . because [his work is arguably] the primary model of a process in which learning is politics and politics can be learning" (p. 29).

Blind spots of exclusion and knowledge gaps in peace education. Although there is a large body of literature that details the trajectory of how peace education has expanded since its inception (e.g., Boulding, 1978; Carey, 1980; Elias, 1990; Harris, Fisk, & Rank, 1998; Harris & Morrison, 2003; Kriesberg, 1991; Lawler, 1995; Lopez, 1989a/b; Reardon, 1988; Stephenson, 1989), subsequent rigorous empirical studies and evaluations of peace education programs remain rare. Clearly, amidst such burgeoning growth and influence, the ongoing need to

critically examine what peace education in practice is prioritizing versus minimizing becomes even more readily apparent.

In terms of content, despite advances in peace education's ability to successfully incorporate critical pedagogy, there remain—as Freire (1993) described—*limit-situations* that inhibit practitioners' ability to connect what would appear to be individual contradictions within peace education to wider trends in society at large. Klein (2007) explained that limit-situations are "perceived limits that once recognised as constructed rather than natural or determined—can be acted upon and deconstructed or transformed" (p. 191). One example of such a limit-situation within peace education (as well as other forms of liberatory education, such as multicultural education) is that which promotes tokenism and tolerance in the name of including traditionally underrepresented voices. When the perspectives of such minority groups are presented in this manner, the result is a:

> hid[ing of] the asymmetrical distribution of power and cultural capital through a form of paternalism that promises a dose of tolerance to the "other". . . . Missing from this message is a sense of mutual respect and even racial and cultural solidarity. (Darder, 2012, p. x)

Such a phenomenon may partially explain why most writings about peace education programs at the university level focus on the Western world, which we have already established is also the origin of the vast majority of scholarly publishing. With this inequity in mind, Robinson (2013) contended that

> A curriculum that is "mainstream-centric" has consequences for all. Such a curriculum reinforces dominant power structures, portrays a false sense of superiority, privileges hegemonic knowledge and values, and denies all the ability to benefit from the knowledge, perspectives, and frames of reference that can be gained by studying, experiencing, and working alongside individuals of non-dominant or mainstream groups. (p. 463)

Banks (2008) concurred that integration of non-dominant perspectives typically occurs at less-than-ideal levels, even within multicultural education (and we will venture here to say, also within peace education).

These two forms of integration typically take one of two approaches. One is the contribution approach (e.g., including a few African pieces in a course about world literature otherwise largely dominated by high-income countries). The second is the only marginally better additive approach (e.g., including a course offering specifically about African literature, without discussing broader structural issues of oppression, thus further entrenching writers from this part of the world as "Other").

Future Discourse

Ashton (2007) offered an intriguing look at how theories of change could be applied to peace education program development and defines *theory of change* as "the implicit assumptions held by practitioners and participants about why the activities they choose for addressing a particular problem will work" (p. 42). It would be a major contribution to the literature if more researchers explored this convergence of topics, as doing so would likely advance the degree of seriousness other scholars afford peace studies as a discipline, since it would mean more options for charting measurable impact.

Existing theories of change within peace education (though they are hardly universally and uniformly applied) include the following ideas:

> peace education requires a pedagogical shift to [learner]-centered and shared-leadership methods; peace education permeates the systems within which it is taught; and peace education changes the participants' perspective on "the other" in a positive direction. (Ashton, Melkonian, & Sargsyan, 2001, p. 42)

Another notable example is Staub's (1989) assertion that for change to occur, there must exist a critical mass of people who share attitudes, a culture in which they can freely express those attitudes, and a broader society where such attitudes are accepted as valid.

Many other researchers have concurred that incorporating theory of change into peace education evaluations and academic research in general would be a valuable strategy to pursue in order to draw stronger correlations between expectations and actual outcomes (Church & Rogers, 2006; Lederach, 1997; Ross, 2001; Shapiro, 2002).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

> I long to be part of a research process dedicated to producing change through one-on-one relationships based on mutual respect and the appreciation of differences. I crave methodological tools that capture co-researchers' lived contexts, intersectional identities and complex personhood, so as to not only look at their oppressive experiences, but also honor their dynamic assets and desires. (Willink et al., 2014, p. 300)

As a qualitative case study, this project combined the following elements: individual interviews with M.A. program administrators, faculty members, and alumnae, along with civil society leaders and Rwandan Government (GoR) officials, and detailed field notes. This chapter outlines the methodology of my qualitative case study, including the rationale for the study design choices and how these methods proposed to answer my three research questions.

Specifically, I explain why a case study is relevant to those questions, summarize the complex research approval process in Rwanda and the study's timeline, then delineate my design and procedures, including my choices around recruitment and protection of study participants, and the resulting demographics of the interviewee sample.

Additionally, I discuss how I used decolonizing methodology (one of the two prongs of my conceptual framework) in the approach I took to my fieldwork, particularly the components involving relationship building in-country, my process of conducting of interviews, and reflections on my own positionality.

Relatedly, I elucidate the meaning-making phase of the study after I returned from my field work, in which I used Trint (2019) as a supplemental online tool for transcribing the interviews (in addition to the hiring of a local young professional to do the first round of transcriptions). I then describe how I chose an online coding software called Dedoose (2018) as my analytical tool and concurrently utilized constructivist grounded theory (CGT) as the guiding

methodological tool for the synthesis of the data. These sections on the data analysis phase also report the coding trends I observed.

Finally, I offer a self-assessment of how effective I was in my use of decolonizing methodology as a conceptual framework driving my ethos on the ground and my use of CGT as an analytical guide.

Rationale for Methodology

Case studies can sometimes be limiting in that the lessons they present cannot always confidently be widely generalized, even to other seemingly similar situations. However, when circumstances indicate that within a given field, such as peace education, there is a story to be told that is both unique and heretofore marginalized within the discourse, I argue a case study is in fact the most appropriate method for giving voice to that story.

Indeed, the Sub-Saharan African perspective on peace education at the university level is all but absent from scholarship on peace education, despite many countries in that region having endured tremendous violence. Yin (2009) concurred that when a situation is rare (like the M.A. program at the UR), a case study is an appropriate methodological choice in conducting scholarly investigation.

Furthermore, when the content of the research questions in a study include examination of organizational decision making, as was the case with this investigation, Sturm (2006) argued that case study analysis can offer insight into whether change is unfolding as intended. He specifically pointed out that "close examination of an ongoing initiative offers an opportunity to observe and theorize about the mechanisms that enable or discourage learning, empowerment,

participation and accountability" (p. 253). These are all elements of organizational success about which I hoped my case study at UR would yield insights.

Formative Assessment

The study also adapted the notion of *formative assessment* for the goal of creating a useful narrative of the program, in that rather than inserting myself into the culture of the program as an evaluator, I wanted whatever we created together from the study to be useful to the program from their perspective. In other words, I aimed for the study to be "assessment *for* learning, not assessment *of* learning" (Looney, 2011, p. 5).

My reason for adopting this theory as one of the guiding philosophies of the study was to ensure that Rwandan stakeholders in the program understood that it was meant to capture their stories, not to evaluate their effectiveness. I will know I have been successful at keeping this notion at the forefront if in the end, they feel I have been more like a scholarly journalist and an ally of their work than an outside assessor.

Restatement of Research Questions

I developed my methodology specifically to address the unique nature of this study's particular research questions. As a reminder to the reader, they are threefold:

1. IMPACT: How do University of Rwanda administrators, faculty members, and alumni affiliated with the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation envision the program's contribution to the development of leaders who will prioritize and be equipped to maintain peace and stability?

    1a. How are these insider perspectives of the M.A. program different from those of leaders engaged in peacebuilding outside the M.A. program?

2. IMPLEMENTATION: How are educational leaders and other stakeholders making decisions related to achieving M.A. program goals? (e.g., What strategies are being employed? What constraints and tradeoffs do they face? What mission drove the program's evolution?)
3. INSIGHTS: From the perspective of study participants, what lessons can the M.A. program offer the fields of peace education and educational leadership?

Foreign Research

According to the United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Office for Human Research Protections (2017), Rwanda is one of over 100 countries that has established laws, guidelines and regulations for research involving human subjects. Specific to education research, the Rwanda Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) maintains a Directorate of Science, Technology, and Research (DSTR), from which all non-native individual or institutional researchers must obtain authorization before proceeding with their activities. As part of this clearance process, researchers must provide proof of affiliation with approved institutions, a list that includes the University of Rwanda, along with its various centers and colleges.

There was a multistep process to gaining research clearance to conduct a study at the University of Rwanda, entailing the following actions (UR, 2014):

1. Extensive application forms (including RCEXR: Application for Research Clearance by External Researchers and RETHC: Research Ethical Approval Form), along with a complete research proposal, Informed Consent form, and data collection instruments,

were submitted first to my designated UR supervisor, the Coordinator of the UR CCM and a Senior lecturer in the M.A. program.[3]

2. Within five business days, my supervisor informed me of the application's approval, then passed documentation to Dr. Kato Njunwa at the UR Research Directorate.
3. Once both my supervisor and the UR Research Directorate approved of my study (which had already been stated informally), I was then provided with an official letter of affiliation, an invitation letter from the UR Rector, and an ethics clearance letter.
4. These items, along with the aforementioned application forms, were then combined with a completed DSTR Application for Authority to Conduct Research in Rwanda and DSTR Affiliation Confirmation Form, then resubmitted to Dr. Njunwa as a complete application package.
5. Upon Dr. Njunwa's approval, the UR Research Directorate issued me a letter to the Director General of Immigration and Emigration.
6. This letter and aforementioned documentation were then submitted to the Director General of the DSTR, which, upon approval, resulted in my receiving a research identity card and a Research Clearance Certificate from DSTR.
7. All documentation from UR and DSTR were submitted together to the Director General of Immigration and Emigration, along with an application for a subclass N2 visa (Occupational Trainee), a curriculum vita, a copy of the notified diploma

[3] Since 2008, the language of instruction in Rwanda has been shifted from French to English in all public schools, including universities; thus, it was highly likely that anyone I sought to interview at the University of Rwanda would speak fluent English, as well as Kinyarwanda and French. However, during the approval process with the MINEDUC and UR, I was told it would be necessary to provide the Letter of Informed Consent and other documents in Kinyarwanda as well.

> or degree, and a certificate of good conduct from recognized U.S. law enforcement authorities confirming no criminal convictions. Once an N2 visa is granted, it remains valid for two years from the time of approval (DGIE, n.d.).

These complex approval processes were initiated parallel to my seeking approval from LMU's IRB. In summary, I took every measure to ensure my study complied with not only Rwandan laws, regulations, and guidelines for protection of human subjects, but also with American guidelines governing such activities.

Study Timeline

Starting in Summer 2014, I had already begun the process of gaining access to the site. Between Summer 2014 and Spring 2017, I laid the groundwork for my study by developing a number of key relationships. Specifically, I received unofficial written permission to conduct field research from key administrators of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program, including the then-Director of the Centre for Conflict Management, a research hub on campus that houses the program, the Deputy Director/Principal for the Centre for Conflict Management, and the UR Research Director.

These leaders wrote a letter of affiliation to submit to the Ministry of Education that would allow me to enter the country. My existing contacts assured me that Rwandan faculty members and administrators would be more than happy to be contacted and seem to value having their perspective heard, especially given the fact that African scholars have been traditionally marginalized on the worldwide academic scene.

In February 2017, I defended my dissertation proposal to my doctoral committee and also received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to move forward. Beginning May 9, 2017, I

then took a seven-week leave of absence from my job at West Los Angeles College to make a trip to Rwanda in order to conduct my fieldwork. My dissertation advisor, Dr. Elizabeth C. Reilly, joined me at the four-week mark, both to support my research and to conduct her research on women in Rwandan educational leadership, so that we would have the opportunity to exchange insights from our respective projects and so that her experienced supervision would ensure my methodological rigor.

Upon my return in June 2017, I then spent the remainder of Summer 2017 through Fall 2017 transcribing and reviewing interview content. For the whole of 2018, due to significant delays and life stressors, I engaged in coding via Dedoose (2018) and finally did the bulk of the prose writing and analysis during Spring 2019.

Design and Procedures for Data Collection

The investigation used two means of gathering data, explained in detail below. First, I recorded detailed audio field notes immediately following every interview that describe the context, my impressions, and any other pertinent information. Similarly, I recorded conversations I had with my dissertation chair once she arrived, in order to capture the themes that I saw emerging; I also used postcards I wrote each day to my mother to supplement the field notes with further information addressing both the research questions and my decolonizing methodology-based self-reflection about my experience in Rwanda.

Second, and most importantly, I conducted semistructured individual interviews. It was my goal to have extended interviews with at least 10 people, including a mix of teaching faculty members, program administrators, and students or alumnae, along with GoR officials and civil society leaders. Luckily, thanks to the extraordinarily generous response from those individuals I

reached out to, I was ultimately able to conduct 31 interviews, with 30 being included directly in the analysis and quoted from in Chapter 4.

It had also been my hope to gain permission to observe classes and/or staff meetings related to the M.A. program, but unfortunately classes had already concluded for the semester by the time I arrived, as had official gatherings of campus leadership.

Participant Recruitment, Sampling, and Protections

I used purposive sampling in this study, in that I identified some of the potential interviewees by doing online research about the M.A. program and about the university itself. However, because I anticipated greater success in gaining trust from my intended interviewees once I was in-country, I also planned to utilize snowball sampling (otherwise known as chain sampling or referral sampling) by letting my existing contacts know that I welcomed their introductions to other relevant individuals who may have had valuable perspectives to contribute to the study. I did not plan any exclusions in my sample based on gender, but I did limit my sample to those who were 18 years of age and older, for the purpose of simplifying the research approval process.

Because I timed my study to coincide with the end of the Spring 2017 semester at the University of Rwanda where most of my intended interviewees either work or study, I had to limit my interview settings to the geographical area of Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, where four of the 14 university campuses is located. Although some interviews were arranged in advance via email prior to my fieldwork in Rwanda, I anticipated that there might be individuals who were not available once I arrived, whereas other interviews were likely to emerge from introductions that occurred once I was in-country. Nonetheless, all interviewees lived and

worked in the Kigali metro area or travelled there frequently, although that may not be the city or even country of their birth, since Kigali draws people from many other locales.

Specific individuals I interviewed included: Rwandan Government (GoR) officials in sub-bodies of the Ministry of Education, the Principal (Dean) of UR's College of Arts and Social Sciences, teaching faculty members in the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program, alumnae of that program, and administrators at UR's Centre for Conflict Management, which also supports the program. I also sought interviews with NGO officials who can speak to peace work happening in communities outside the university setting. [4]

Potential risks and benefits to participants. Although it has been more than 20 years since the Genocide, and Rwanda enjoys long-term stability relative to some of its neighbors, it remains a complex sociopolitical setting in which some topics are still difficult to discuss candidly with people. Many sectors are still working towards a postconflict "new normal" and a sustainable alternative to violence, including the education sector, and especially peace education. Thus, I anticipated that the individuals with whom I interacted during the course of conducting my study might be experiencing the stress and burden that comes with reconstruction in a postconflict society and may find both past violence that catalyzed the creation of the M.A. program and present stressors difficult to talk about in depth.

However, apart from this risk they have already taken on in their vocation, I did not foresee greater than minimal risk in their agreeing to participate in this study. These minimal risks may have included possible exposure of less-than-successful decision-making practices,

[4] For a complete table of study participants, please see Appendix A.

and similarly, potential conclusions being drawn by me (or readers of the results of this study) that might not paint the programs in a positive light.

My plan to mitigate these risks was to use the aforementioned guiding methodological framework of formative assessment, as developed by Looney (2011), which encourages the use of assessment in any setting as being geared towards constructive, iterative improvement, rather than merely the pointing out of flaws. In this way, I hoped that the tone of my writing on the M.A. program would ultimately come through as both honest and palatable to the stakeholders developing it. Additionally, I planned to be transparent in my process by sharing my writing at various stages with them before submitting it, either to my doctoral committee or for publication.

On the other hand, some benefits I anticipated that they might derive from participation included program publicity, the possibility of their M.A. program being seen as a model for other programs, and perhaps even getting additional funding or sponsorship from outside the country for further program development. Additionally, I hoped that my study might catalyze further publishing opportunities for faculty members associated with the M.A. program, or even with the University at large.

Confidentiality. I actually expected that subjects would want to be identified by name, given the tone I intended to take in documenting their process. My chair surmised based on her vast research experience that most individuals would consent to having their names used, so that they might be recognized for their contributions to the leadership work of the program. If participants indicated that they wished to remain anonymous, their comments would have simply been aggregated into the body of data.

However, in order to guarantee individuals' preferences were taken into consideration, I ensured that, beyond signing a Letter of Informed Consent (see Appendix B), participants also had the opportunity to sign a document that invited them to decide whether or not their names would be used in publication or presentations (see Confidentiality Waiver, in Appendix C).

Ultimately, because of political sensitivities that came to light during the interviews, I actually opted to use pseudonyms for all participants in order to practice an abundance of caution. During the data collection process, I protected anonymity and confidentiality where requested by coding each person's identity. The only other person I planned to allow access to my data was my dissertation chair, Dr. Elizabeth C. Reilly, a local transcriptionist for the interview recordings, and a local translator if I needed to hire someone in-country for any of the interviews (which turned out to be unnecessary). I planned to save all data to my Google Drive (2019), which is password protected, and to not keep it on my desktop or in other locations where it could be tampered with or read by someone unaffiliated with the project.

Informed consent. As noted above, I had planned to have all participants—anonymous or otherwise—sign a letter of informed consent (see Appendix B). More specifically, I planned to discuss the process of informed consent generally with individuals prior to each planned interview, by either phone or email. During any such discussions, I ensured I had addressed any specific questions or concerns participants to the extent that I was able, informing them that we would review their understanding before the interview. If each participant was amenable to these preconditions, I emailed them the consent form with instructions to sign, date, and return by email to my personal address, along with any preferences or limitations regarding scheduling.

Conducting the Interviews

Interviews began with participants in May 2017 and were conducted between May and June of that year. The population of interest for this study was faculty members, administrators, and alumnae of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation at the University of Rwanda, along with practitioners doing peacebuilding in other university or non-university contexts. I identified a sample of individuals that fit the requirements for this study via purposive and snowball/chain sampling. Of the 44 individuals I reached out to for interviews, 71% were willing and/or able to oblige my request, and thus, the final sample size for this study was 30, though I ultimately excluded one of the interviews to use in future investigations.

I initially contacted each participant by text and/or email to arrange the interview. Given that the individuals I sought to interview are extremely busy and would be meeting with me at the end of their Spring semester, I made every effort to schedule any such meetings at times convenient to their schedules, to ensure I had at least 30 to 60 minutes to talk with each individual. I arranged to meet each interview in whatever location they suggested as a place where they would be comfortable and feel free to speak candidly.

If at all possible, I shared my proposed interview questions with each participant via email so that they had the opportunity to consider their comfort level and familiarize themselves with the themes I was exploring. I also sent a formal letter of introduction to each participant by email prior to their interview, along with an Informed Consent form, a Confidentiality Waiver form, and an Experimental Subjects Bill of Rights (see Appendices B, C, and D respectively), and finally included my study proposal, my Ministry of Health research clearance, and the proposed interview questions (see Appendix E).

At the start of each interview, I reviewed with both the objectives of the interview and the purpose of the overall study. I emphasized that no compensation was provided for participation in the interview, other than refreshments if appropriate, and that they were welcome to withdraw at any time or decline to answer any question they wished without penalty. Additionally, I reminded them once more of the process in place for confidentiality and anonymity.

Although it would have been ethically questionable for me to offer direct financial compensation to my study participants, I did acknowledge their generous sharing of time and energy with me in the form of a modest thank you gift. One possibility to offer to bring books or other peace education resources they do not have easy access to in Rwanda, or to give service in some form, whether by utilizing my experience, volunteering to help with a project, or finding some other need that I could fulfill. In my case, I brought leather LMU ID holders containing my personal business card.

In some cases, the interviewees provided me ahead of time with a signed Letter of Informed Consent and, if they were comfortable with having their identity known, a signed Confidentiality Waiver. However, if they were not able to do so, I accepted their signed documents at the start of the interview (or in some cases, afterwards if they expressed that preference) and provided a digital copy to each interviewee if requested. Also, at the start of each discussion, I asked once more if he or she consented to be interviewed and to have the interview digitally recorded for later transcription.

Interviews were conducted at 18 sites in 10 different Kigali neighborhoods (plus two by phone), which were chosen based on the preference of each interviewee, and their proximity to and ability to access the location. Eight of these locations (and nine of the interviews) were

public places, such as restaurants or bars, while 10 spaces—and 21 of the interviews—were private spaces (usually participants' offices, but in one case, a home, two others, by phone, and two others, a break during a conference).

During the interviews themselves, I attempted to follow the interview protocol in Appendix E, including the question guide. However, because it was my intention to allow themes to emerge from the participants themselves, the discussions often took tangents I did not anticipate in the question guide. However, it was my goal to create an environment in which all participants would have the opportunity to speak freely and redirect the conversation as they saw fit to ensure that the details they considered most important and relevant were captured. Along with recording each interview, I continued to take periodic notes related to my impressions of each person's nonverbal behavior, thoughts on their responses, pertinent observations of the setting and atmosphere, etc.

After each interview, participants were asked to recommend additional individuals to interview, based on the content we had just discussed. In this way, snowball—or chain—sampling resulted in a greater number of relevant participants than I would otherwise have had access to or been aware of (Hatch, 2002).

How Decolonizing Methodology Informed the Field Work Process

The choices I made on the ground, as explained above, were partially for logistical reasons, but were also grounded in the ethos of the conceptual framework I chose to embrace for this study, namely decolonizing methodology. Numerous scholars, such as Pennington and Prater (2016), Falcón (2016), and Vanner (2015) elucidated specific research strategies that are in

keeping with the ethics of decolonizing methodology, and which are themes across their bodies of work. These include four key elements:

- Embrace of what Falcón has called "conscious negotiation of imperial privilege" (p. 181),
- Co-construction of a community that includes relationships across hierarchies of race, class, etc., and which values ongoing partnership not simply temporary rapport during a self-contained study,
- Use of multilingual resources wherever possible—to "advance the circulation of transnational intellectual flows", as Falcón put it (p. 181), and
- Emphasis on programs, projects, and communities that embody liberatory principles and whose momentum could be bolstered by discussion in the research arena.

My plan to reflexively confront my privilege throughout the research process addressed the first strategy, particularly with the rigorous use of audio field notes both before and after each interview and at various other points during my time in-country.

As to the second strategy, it was never my intention to drop into the M.A. program community at the University of Rwanda for six weeks, never to be seen or heard from again. Indeed, from the beginning I decided I would only consider the project successful if I was able to approach it with the goal of lasting partnerships between UR and LMU or another peace education program with which a meaningful exchange could be established.

My methodological choice to make use of a local translator and a local research assistant provided the option for me to implement the third strategy, a choice I delve into more deeply in the self-assessment section of this chapter. Meanwhile, the study focus itself was related to the

fourth strategy in that it illuminates the nuances of a program whose story has not yet been told to my intended audience.

Use of the interactive interview approach. My intention was to use the interview questions as more of a conversation starter than a rigid plan, instead embracing the *interactive interview approach* espoused by numerous methodological scholars (Bourdieu, 1977; Collins, 1998; Kvale, 2006; Lena & Hammarström, 2008), including specifically decolonizing methodology scholars (Falcón, 2016; Núñez Sarmiento, 2009). A conversation conducted as an "interactive interview" is more like a genuine dialogue that "can disrupt the one-way nature of interviews because having a 'free flow of ideas' undercuts the dynamic of the researcher guiding the interview" and potentially funneling it towards expected outcomes (Núñez Sarmiento, 2009, p. 183, as cited in Falcón, 2016).

In fact, Núñez Sarmiento challenged researchers that if they are truly committed to genuine dialogue, they must be prepared to have their participants "interview" them, or at least be ready to answer questions they may have that emerge from the conversation, so that they are not carrying the entire burden of vulnerability. Núñez Sarmiento (2009) asserted that such a collaborative attitude towards interviews inevitably results in the improvement of interview questions, along with addition of new questions that she claimed would never have occurred to her on her own. This research outcome is known as "catalytic validity", i.e., "the extent to which research moves those it studies to understand the world and the way it is shaped in order for them to transform it" (Lather, 1991, p. 159 as cited in Vanner, 2015, p. 8).

Participant Demographic Trends

In an effort to provide background demographic data about the participants in this study, the table in Appendix A lists all 30 study participants, their pseudonyms, their position held within the UR or at their local site, among other useful demographic details and context. However, Table 1 shows the participants breakdown by gender, professional role, national origin, age range/stage of career, and interview length, followed by brief summary trends.

Table 1
Participant Demographics by Category

Category	Number of Study Participants
Gender	
Male	20
Female	10
Professional Role	
Faculty Member/UR Researcher	16
Alumna of UR M.A. Program	4
Alumna from Other UR Program	6
M.A. Program Administrator	4
University Administrator	7
Government Official	5
Civil Society/NGO Leader	11
National Origin	
Rwandan Citizen	23
African Expatriate	2
Western Expatriate	5
Age Range and Stage of Career	
Under 30 (Early Career)	5
30-50 (Midcareer)	16
Over 50 (Established Career)	9
Interview Length	
Under 30 Minutes	2
30-60 Minutes	13
60-90 Minutes	11
90+ Minutes	4

Note. There are more than 30 in the Professional Role category because most of the interviewees fall into more than one subcategory and thus are counted for each. Adapted from Dedoose Version 8.2.14**. (**2018**).** Los Angeles, CA: SocioCultural Research Consultants, LLC.

Gender Distribution

More than twice as many males were interviewed than females, though this kind of sample was partially due to the comparatively large number of males in positions of leadership at the UR, both as faculty members and as administrators. None of the individuals from those two groups were females; however, interestingly, all four M.A. program graduates I interviewed were females.

For those with a civil society/NGO background (outside of government agencies), there was greater gender parity, with five males and six females represented in the study sample.

Professional Responsibilities and Roles

Professional responsibilities within the participant pool were diverse and ranged from faculty member or university administrator to human rights lawyer to program/project manager to researcher. Overall, 15 organizations and/or schools were represented, and within the UR itself, nine separate departments or centres are represented in the pool of interviewees.

Of the 30 study participants, 14 represented the bird's-eye view of someone involved in strategizing and bigger-picture organizational planning, while 16 were more frequently engaged in work that is on-the-ground and out in the field.

National Origin

While 23 of the 30 study participants were Rwandan nationals, six of these individuals furthermore self-disclosed that they were also returned refugees who had fled in response to the Genocide. Of the remaining seven interviewees, two were African expatriates from Uganda and Tanzania (both of whom have been serving in high-level educational leadership roles in Rwanda for decades), and five were transplants from Western countries, including three from

the United States (two of whom have had longstanding ties to Rwanda), one from Italy, and one from the United Kingdom.

Socioeconomic Status

Although my participants were diverse by numerous other standards, from a socioeconomic standpoint, I must acknowledge that they all represent the comparative elite of Rwandan society (or even their home country societies in the case of the foreigners represented). In a nation where over 75% of citizens work in agriculture as of 2018 (Index Mundi, 2018), in contrast, all of my study participants have bachelor's degrees, including those from the NGO arena, and all but one have earned master's degrees, while 16 hold doctoral degrees.

Although this sample is obviously not representative of Rwandan society at large, I nonetheless argue that the skew in SES does not limit the validity of my findings because my research questions are specifically geared towards those with higher educational attainment who are more poised to comment on the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program.

Age Range and Career Stage

Over half of my study sample were professionals between the ages of 30 and 50 and at the midcareer stage of their working life. In contrast, only five were younger than 30 years old (and thus in the early stage of their career), while nine were over 50 years old and thus solidly established in their career.

My reflection on the reasons for this age spread led me to consider once again the socioeconomic makeup and educational statistics for Rwanda at present. Given that most Rwandans do not even complete university (and of those that do, many do not go straight into a program from secondary school), it would make sense that when I was seeking out those who are

meaningful stakeholders in the M.A. program (i.e., those who teach or lead program decision making in some way) along with those who lead in civil society, those individuals would be more statistically likely to skew slightly older.

Meanwhile, for those over the age of 50 at the time of our interview in 2017, they would have been 25 or younger during the Genocide, and many from that age demographic at the time are likely to have either perished in the killings or fled the country (or at the very least, found their educational or career progress stunted).

Interview Length

Many of my study participants stressed lack of time to talk for very long prior to our meeting, saying they had maybe 20 minutes at the most. However, I was pleasantly surprised to find that once we were actually together, most purposely extended the time they were willing to spend with me, with 13 spending 30 to 60 minutes and 15 spending over an hour in conversation.

This turn of events was especially meaningful to me given that I met with most of my interviewees during their workdays, or on a weekday evening, and their change of heart indicates to me that I was largely successful in earning their trust, candor and warmth. Four people even met with me more than once in my interviewer capacity, and each of my encounters with them was at least one hour. Seven of my study participants even offered at least one person (and in one case, seven people) for me to reach out to whom they felt would be promising participants.

For the two interviews that were less than 30 minutes, both were with individuals at the highest levels of leadership for their respective organizations, and so I erred on the side of caution (and courtesy) in allowing our discussions to go beyond the original time allotted.

Explication of Data Organization, Reduction, and Analysis

Upon completion of each interview, I uploaded the audio recording from my phone, and the backup from my portable recorder, to Box (2019) and Google Drive (2019) as soon as possible, usually within 12 hours, then erased the original recordings from my phone and recorder. I assigned a number to each typed transcription and stored them as password-protected files. My data analysis also included field notes transcriptions and transcripts of debriefing sessions with my advisor.

Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) as an Analytical Tool

I used constructivist grounded theory (CGT) as the methodology for analysis of the data and for generating of themes (e.g., Charmaz, 2014, 2017a/b; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Vanner, 2015). Indeed, CGT has been delineated in a great detail by a wide variety of scholars, including but not limited to Albert et al. (2018), Alemu et al. (2017), Charmaz (2014, 2017a/b), Kenny & Fourie (2015), Nagel et al. (2015), Ramalho et al. (2015), and Vanner (2015).

Grounded theory, the methodology from which CGT emerged, is well-known and has become increasingly respected in qualitative research since Glaser and Strauss first developed it in 1967. Most of the core elements of grounded theory utilized by researchers are also present in CGT methodology and were important strategies for my own study, such as:

- Analysis of data as they are being gathered, rather than waiting until after collection is complete (often in the form of memo keeping during interviews and focus groups);
- Construction of coding as part of pattern recognition in the data and comparison of such data across and between various sources; and

- Development of theories throughout the process that are empirically based, versus imposing theory to fit the data.

However, CGT functions with one key difference in the research ethos, namely that because it is constructivist in nature, it dismisses the notion that theory "emerges" from data in some kind of objective vacuum, in favor of embracing researcher subjectivity and transparency about that subjectivity throughout the process of making meaning of the data (Charmaz, 2014, 2017a/b).

In fact, CGT "recognize[s] instead the role of the researcher in shaping the narrative by drawing on her own experiences and beliefs and through her interactions with participants and the data" (Vanner, 2015, p. 5); in this way, researcher positionality and (to some degree) unavoidable subjectivity are turned into assets that make the data richer and more nuanced. In addition to themes and insights relevant to the specific research questions of a given study, a circumspect researcher using CGT is able to add to the broader conversation about feminist, decolonizing/postcolonial research approaches (Vanner, 2015).

CGT Strategies. One way in which researcher positionality is dealt with directly in the practice of CGT is via member checks of interviews, in which participants have the opportunity to review both transcripts and initial conclusions to offer their perspective on the validity of those outcomes. This practice is also known as interactive consent and offers interviewees the opportunity to make amendments to their statements or even withdraw their comments altogether if they so choose, thus making the safety and comfort of participants of paramount importance (Falcón, 2016; Vanner, 2015).

Another strategy is the utilization of direct quotes from participants, rather than immediately filtering them through the researcher's reframing of their perspectives. Wherever

possible, I have included direct quotations from those leaders I interview in order to preserve their intended meaning as much as possible.

Transcription Procedures and Safeguarding of Data

According to IRB protocol, the audio recordings from the 30 semistructured interviews were securely stored, first in Box (2019) and then on Google Drive (2019), until they were ready for transcription. A young student of peace education (a recent UR graduate named Martin[5]) performed the transcription of 25 interviews. He was recommended to me by one of the interviewees with whom I spent a significant amount of time.

Although Martin is not a professional transcriptionist, his spoken English is quite strong, and he had a strong desire to learn more about peacebuilding efforts, such as my study. I agreed that he might learn a great deal by hearing the interviews and would also build upon a new skill, which could be useful as he begins his own career in the field.

There were five of the 30 interviews that I transcribed myself, using an online audio-to-text website called Trint (2019), because I deemed them potentially too sensitive for an outside listener. Additionally, I used Trint (2019) to transcribe all of my audio field notes and all recordings of discussions between myself and my advisor Dr. Elizabeth C. Reilly during our time in Rwanda.

Martin and I met in person to discuss the process, and once he expressed his desire to be hired for the task, I sent him a contract and confidentiality agreement for the work. Due to the sensitivity of potentially identifiable public figures and others, we agreed upon additional

[5] This individual's name has been changed to protect his anonymity, just as I have used pseudonyms for my study participants to protect their anonymity. He did not request that to be kept anonymous, but my ultimate conclusion after my time in Rwanda was that doing so would be the most prudent and respectful option.

safeguards for the protection of the data, which were further reinforced by the agreements Martin signed. Once these forms were completed, I sent him a password-protected link to the audio recordings through Box (2019).

He completed one initial transcription, then followed up with me about any questions or clarifications he needed. We had a second meeting prior to my returning to the United States in late June and agreed that in addition to transcribing the conversations themselves, Martin would add comments in the margins where he had questions or perspectives he thought might be useful to the study. Following our final in-person meeting, Martin then completed the remaining transcriptions from a distance between June 20, 2017 and August 15, 2017, during which time we checked in regularly via WhatsApp (2019).

Review of transcripts by study participants. In order to ensure a collaborative process, and to embrace all opportunities for my interviewees to feel understood, I performed a "member check" by sending each person a written copy of their interview via their preferred email once transcription was complete.

In those emails, I instructed participants to review the transcript and indicate whether they wished to add details, remove comments, or amend anything they had said. I also offered the option to be removed from the study altogether to stress that their participation remained strictly voluntary. Lastly, I included any follow-up questions I had developed after closely examining their transcript and after reviewing Martin's comments and questions. I asked for feedback within two weeks, upon which time I said I would assume they approved the use of the transcript as it was if I had received no response.

Dedoose as a Tool for Data Coding and Analysis

Once I completed my transcriptions, I uploaded them into a web-based software program called Dedoose (2018) for analyzing mixed methods research. This tool came highly recommended to me by both a cohort-mate and my former supervisor who had recently completed her Ed.D. Dedoose (2018) not only allowed for quick and easy coding of all interview and field note transcriptions, but is also designed so as to facilitate deep cross-tabulation of my codes with demographic categories such as gender, career stage, or professional role.

As I coded, it autopopulated myriad charts, graphs and other data visualizations that are preprogrammed into the system so that a great deal of analysis is essentially automatic and becomes more nuanced the more coding I complete. Additionally, Dedoose (2018) allowed me to include memos as I was coding, which served as a parking lot for emerging thoughts and questions I have, but which are linked to the appropriate passage(s) that inspired them.

Furthermore, the program was password protected (with the option to add a project-specific password for each study) and securely encrypted, following the rigorous standards of the United States National Security Agency (NSA). The program also autosaved every few seconds to ensure that user progress was protected. Apart from the slight learning curve inherent in using an unfamiliar program, to my knowledge, I encountered no technical problems with Dedoose (2018) that would have compromised the integrity of the data for this study. Although this project marked my first time using Dedoose (2018) for coding and analysis, I found it to be intuitive and illuminating; it enabled me to make connections in the data that I never would have found if I had hand coded.

Walkthrough of steps involved in the use of Dedoose. After an informal training session with my cohort-mate, I applied what she taught me, using the following steps:

1. I first created a table of participant descriptors in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet (Microsoft Office 365, Version 1907) with one row per study participant and multiple fields, each represented by a column, and including demographic and contextual details. These fields included the following:
    - Interview Order and Date,
    - Interview Length (Under 30 Minutes, 30 to 60, 60-to 90, or Over 90 Minutes),
    - Interview Setting (Public, Semi-Private, or Private),
    - Referral Method (i.e., how I was connected to each participant),
    - Participant Pseudonym,
    - Gender,
    - Professional Affiliation (UR, Civil Society/NGOs, K12 Schools, Foreign Entity, Government Agency, or some combination thereof),
    - Nationality (Rwandan, African Expat, Western Expat),
    - Age and Career Stage (Under 30/Early Career, 30-50/Midcareer, or Over 50/Established Career)
2. I then uploaded the sheet into the Descriptors tab as a *descriptor set* (see Figure 2).
3. Once the descriptor set was in place, with the relevant fields reviewed in the Descriptors tab, I then navigated to the Media tab (see Figure 3) and proceeded to upload the completed transcriptions of my interviews, my audio field notes, and my debriefs with Dr. Elizabeth C. Reilly.

4. I was then able to upload each interview as a separate file, with the audio field notes and debriefs combined into one larger file and uploaded together. I ensured that each file had a recognizable title, since Dedoose (2018) retained file names upon upload.

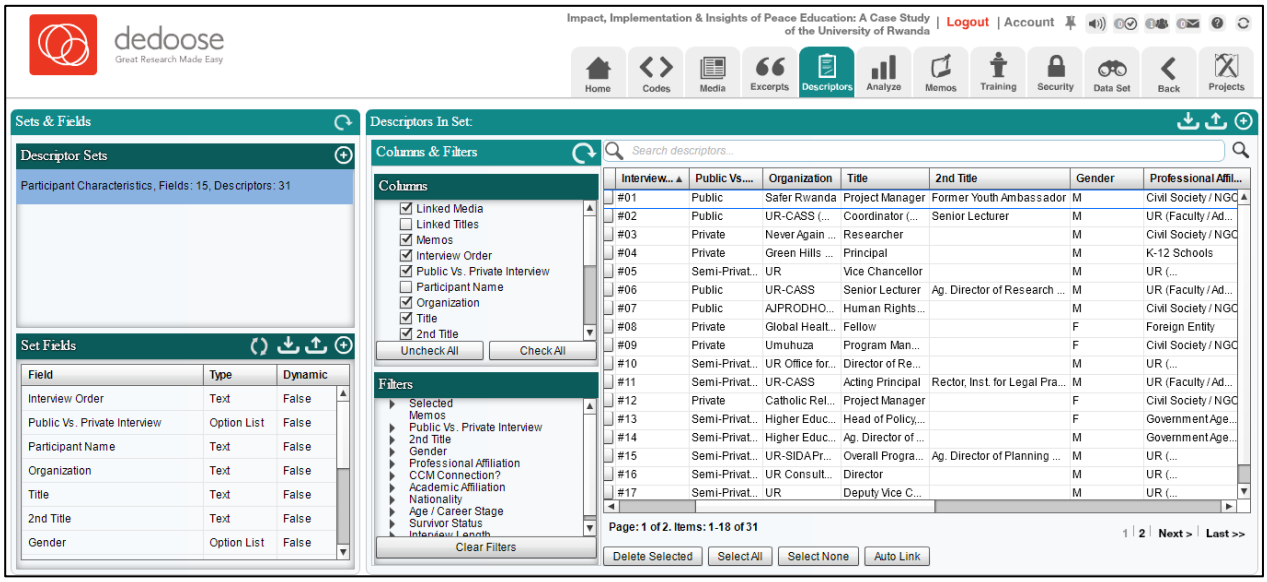

Figure 2. Sample descriptor set and fields in Dedoose. Adapted from Dedoose Version 8.2.14**.** **(**2018**).** Los Angeles, CA: SocioCultural Research Consultants, LLC.

5. After each transcription was uploaded into the Media tab, I was then able to link each piece of media (i.e., each transcription file I had uploaded) to someone in the descriptor set. For example, I could link the transcript of Interview #22 with the row in the descriptor set corresponding to that participant, thus connecting their demographic and contextual specifics to their responses, and later enabling Dedoose (2018) to offer cross-tabulated responses for those descriptor fields (e.g., comparing how many people addressed the question of gender if they were male versus female).

Figure 3 on the next page offers a visual of the media files as linked to descriptor rows in the same tab of Dedoose (2018).

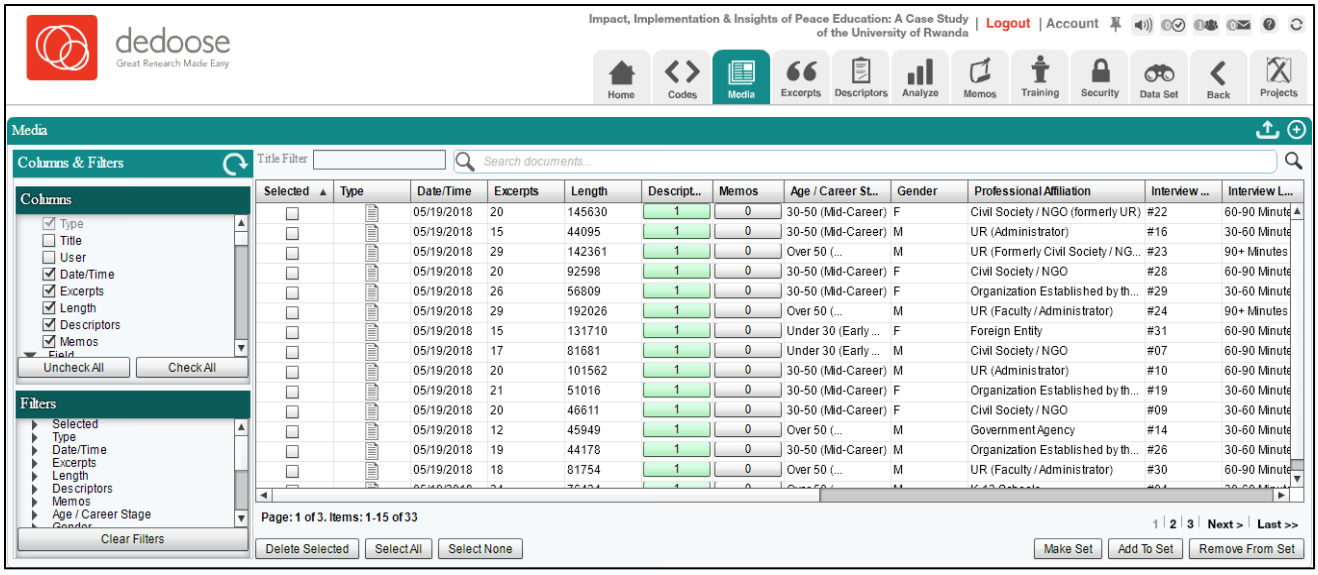

Figure 3. Sample linked media files in Dedoose. Adapted from Dedoose Version 8.2.14**.** (2018)**.** Los Angeles, CA: SocioCultural Research Consultants, LLC.

6. At this point, the stage was set to begin the actual coding process. First, I needed to navigate to the Codes tab, where I created what Dedoose (2018) calls *parent codes* (or root codes), *child codes*, and *grandchild codes*, as I alluded to in the introduction to Chapter 3. The parent codes consisted primarily of the three overarching themes (i.e., each research question or RQ linked with its corresponding discourse theme or DT and related set of interview questions or IQs); however, I also created parent codes for the following thematic categories:

    - Demographic Information and Opinions (i.e., further details that came from participant answers to IQ1-6),
    - Conceptual Framework (i.e., anything related to the aforementioned two prongs of structural violence and decolonizing methodology),
    - Bureaucratic and Logistical Hurdles (mostly from field notes and debriefs),
    - Recommendations for Chapter 5,
    - Non-Interviewees I Met or Special Places Visited,

- Peacebuilding Landscape in Rwanda,
- Amazing Quotes,
- Random Lessons, and
- Follow-Up to Take or Future Literature to Read

After adding these parent / root codes, I was able to create a priori child codes, the most important of which are child codes that represent each cluster of interview questions. Thus, for the parent code referring to RQ1/DT1, or Impact, there were three child codes for three interview question clusters: (a) IQ7-8: Inculcating students with key themes, values and skills; (b) IQ9-10: Nurturing social justice advocacy and deep community engagement; and (c) IQ11-12: Inspiring students with a coherent and empowering vision.

For RQ2/DT2, or Implementation, there were similarly three child codes for three interview question clusters: (d) IQ13-15: Logistics of program design and support from partnerships; (e) IQ16-18: Decisions affecting student diversity, equity, and gender parity; and (f) IQ19-20: Mechanisms for addressing differences of opinion and conflict resolution, both among students and staff.

And finally, for RQ3/DT3, or Insights, there were also three child codes for three interview question clusters: (g) IQ21: Perceptions of success; (h) IQ22: Suggestions for improvement; and (i) IQ23-24: Unique characteristics and misconceptions.

To create codes as child codes, they can begin as a root code, then be dragged and dropped underneath the appropriate parent code, forming what Dedoose (2018) calls a code tree. Figure 4 on the next page offers the visual of a partial list of the

parent and child codes after I created them (in green and blue respectively), along with grandchild codes in pink, the development of which I explain further in Step 7.

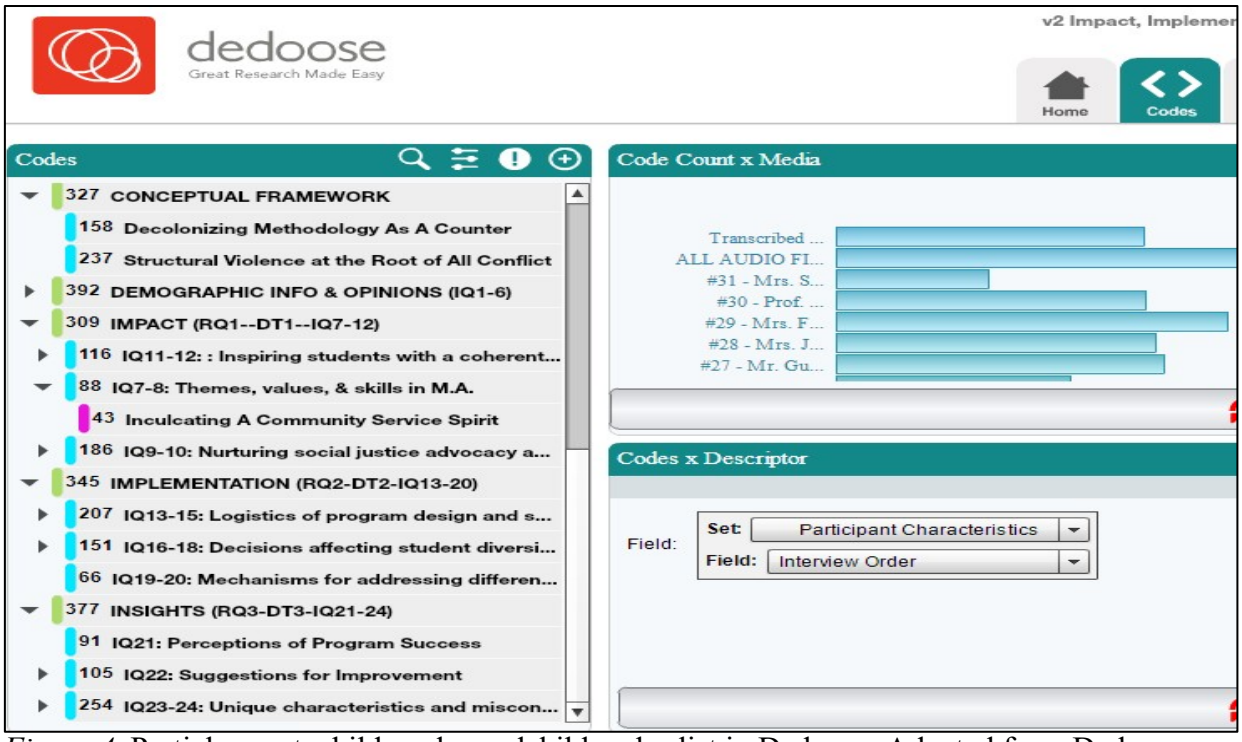

Figure 4. Partial parent, child, and grandchild codes list in Dedoose. Adapted from Dedoose Version 8.2.14**.** **(**2018**).** Los Angeles, CA: SocioCultural Research Consultants, LLC.

With the parent and child codes completely laid out in a reasonable structure, I began the first round of coding, during which I clicked on any one of the media files and read through the transcription. As I described earlier, I was not yet scanning for meaning, but simply for whether excerpts I read corresponded to one or more of the parent or child codes. Thus, I was only trying to capture which passages addressed, for example, IQ21 about perceptions of success, with the plan to revisit excerpts later and look for patterns in the content.

I should mention that I chose to have the child codes roll up to the parent codes, such that if I coded an excerpt for IQ21, for example, it was automatically

coded for RQ3/DT3's parent code as well. Figure 5 demonstrates what the process of coding actually looks like in Dedoose (2018), with a media file open and its useful Quick Code feature open on the righthand side to allow for ease of coding for multiple variables, each of which appears in the top righthand box when a given code is clicked for a highlighted portion of the text.

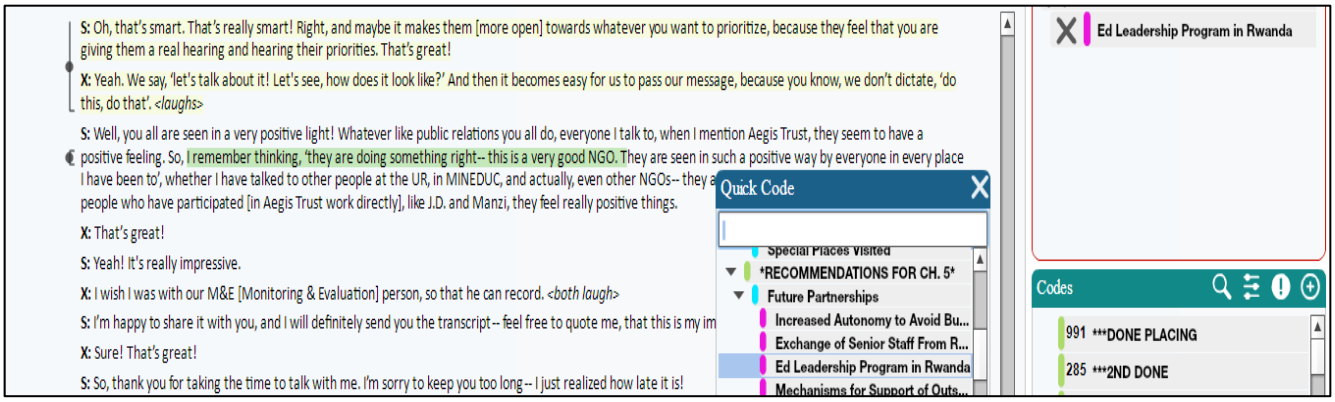

Figure 5. A visual of the coding process in Dedoose. Adapted from Dedoose Version 8.2.14**.** **(**2018)**.** Los Angeles, CA: SocioCultural Research Consultants, LLC.

7. Upon completion of the first round of coding, which was a priori and deductive, I then moved into the second round of coding, which was emergent and inductive. At this point, I revisited all excerpts, this time reviewing them as grouped by the interview question cluster child codes. As I reviewed the excerpts, I created grandchild codes (see pink fields, on code tree, in Figure 4). These grandchild codes came to represent the emerging trends and patterns revealed in both the interview data and the field notes/debriefs.
8. Notice that there are numbers next to each field in the code tree in Figure 4; these numbers delineated how many times that code has been applied across all media files, and became the basis for the later analysis in the Analyze tab. Once the second round of coding was complete, I spent significant time examining the prepopulated charts

and tables Dedoose (2018) creates in the Analyze tab, allowing the researcher to include a quantitative analytical element to what would otherwise be an entirely qualitative study. These data revealed trends that I report in subsections to follow.

Code application frequency. Upon completion of my two rounds of manual data coding in Dedoose (2018), I then used the software to examine such useful trends as co-occurrence of codes, code application frequency, and other pattern-revealing trends. Ultimately, I had a total of 12 a priori parent codes, 25 child codes, and 18 grandchild codes. The number of interview media that have at least one attached excerpt for each code are displayed in Table 2, while the frequency of application for both the parent codes and the child codes are displayed in Table 3.

Table 2
Frequency of Coding by Media Count

Category and Interview Questions	Number of Media Addressing Question
Demographic Information and Opinions IQ1-6	30
IQ1: UR Connection	25
IQ2 Self-Summary	29
IQ3: Personal Aspirations	27
IQ4: Organization Favorites	24
IQ5: Reasons for Org. Involvement	28
IQ6: Changes in Worldview	24
Impact (RQ1—DT1—IQ7-12)	30
IQ7-8: Instilling Key Themes, Values, and Skills	24
IQ9-10: Nurturing Social Justice Advocacy and Deep Community Engagement	28
IQ11-12: Inspiring Students with a Coherent and Powerful Vision	26
Implementation (RQ2—DT2—IQ13-20)	30
IQ13-15: Logistics of Program Design and Support from Partnerships	28
IQ16-18: Decisions Affecting Student Diversity, Equity, and Gender Parity	26
IQ19-20: Mechanisms for Addressing Differences of Opinion and Conflict Resolution	24
Insights (RQ3—DT3—IQ21-24)	30
IQ21: Perceptions of Program Success	27
IQ22: Suggestions for Improvement	29
IQ23-24: Unique Program Characteristics and Misconceptions	30

Note. Adapted from Dedoose Version 8.2.14**.** (2018)**.** Los Angeles, CA: SocioCultural Research Consultants, LLC

Table 2 demonstrates that each of the research questions was addressed across all 30 interviews, and that most interviews addressed most of the interview questions as well.

Table 3
Frequency of Coding by Excerpt Count

Category and Interview Questions	Number of Excerpts Addressing Question
Demographic Information Opinions IQ1-6	393
IQ1: UR Connection	42
IQ2 Self-Summary	70
IQ3: Personal Aspirations	71
IQ4: Organization Favorites	89
IQ5: Reasons for Org. Involvement	63
IQ6: Changes in Worldview	58
Impact (RQ1—DT1—IQ7-12)	374
IQ7-8: Instilling Key Themes, Values, and Skills	83
IQ9-10: Nurturing Social Justice Advocacy and Deep Community Engagement	182
IQ11-12: Inspiring Students with a Coherent and Powerful Vision	109
Implementation (RQ2—DT2—IQ13-20)	377
IQ13-15: Logistics of Program Design and Support from Partnerships	185
IQ16-18: Decisions Affecting Student Diversity, Equity, and Gender Parity	130
IQ19-20: Mechanisms for Addressing Differences of Opinion and Conflict Resolution	62
Insights (RQ3—DT3—IQ21-24)	556
IQ21: Perceptions of Program Success	90
IQ22: Suggestions for Improvement	243
IQ23-24: Unique Program Characteristics and Misconceptions	223

Note. Adapted from Dedoose Version 8.2.14**.** **(**2018)**.** Los Angeles, CA: SocioCultural Research Consultants, LLC

Additionally, it should be noted that Table 3 does not include counts for the number of times I applied the codes below to the transcripts for my field notes or debriefs with my advisor.

These application frequency trends support the notion that my study design effectively addressed the three research questions and corresponding discourse themes. Specifically, because of the well-balanced responses to the 24 interview questions, it was possible to draw reasonable, evidence-based conclusions about the three research questions to which the questions are mapped.

Self-Assessment of My Use of Two Methodologies

This section first considers how effective I was in my embodiment of decolonizing methodological principles as a driving ethos for my time spent in-country, then offers reflections on my facility using constructivist grounded theory (CGT) as an analytical tool during the data synthesis phase.

Decolonizing Methodology in the Field

Falcón (2016) asserted that "practicing acts of reciprocity [shifts our work] from mere awareness of imperial privilege into concrete acts of redistribution" (p. 183). It is in keeping with my decolonizing methodological commitment to community building that I sought and still seek to find some way to give back (Vanner, 2015), rather than simply hearing participants' stories, never to be seen or heard from again.

Co-construction of community. Indeed, as far as the co-construction of community (the second strategy delineated above), I argue that in making this priority my front-and-center focus on the ground, my research process naturally aligned more closely with the authentic priorities of the UR community than it otherwise would have because the impact has potential to be far more than the typical narrow products of doctoral research, such as a completed dissertation or a journal article. Ideally, in the long term, these conversations will provide a catalyst for further improvement of the M.A. program as well as insight into how my institution and UR might benefit from support of one another's peace studies programs.

I am pleased to report that the high percentage of individuals who accepted my request for an interview and who agreed to have their name go on record likely attests to the trust and strong relationships I have been able to build within the UR and other related organizations, both

in person during my two months in-country, and from a distance during the four years leading up to my field work during which I conducted outreach to many of these individuals.

Even among those interviewees with whom I had only limited interaction prior to our conversation, a large number of those participants initially expressed wariness at having their name used, but after we completed our discussion, changed their minds. I hope that such positive responses speak to the rapport I was able to build with them, and the respect and camaraderie I sought to project during each interview or interaction.

Indeed, the relationships I was able to build were so strong that for four of my participants, I ended up having significant contact with them after I returned to the United States. For three of the interviewees, I saw them in person while they were also in the States for academic programs or conferences, and for a fourth interviewee, I was able to connect him with a friend doing Fulbright research in Rwanda, and the two of them ultimately published a paper together and have continued ongoing community work as partners.

Emphasizing and featuring marginalized perspectives. One particular area in which the practice of decolonizing methodology was tricky was in my attitude towards the Rwandan political system. Whereas there is a particular narrative in Western countries that both celebrates President Paul Kagame, but also criticizes him as a dictator, I heard a very mixed narrative on the ground from my interviewees. Although just a few expressed fear of repercussions from his regime (see Appendix F, Stories #1 through #5), others (particularly young people) emphasized their sincere strong admiration for him and how much he has helped Rwanda heal.

Admittedly, I myself certainly saw and continue to see evidence that would seem to suggest that Kagame has exhibited some dictatorial behavior (albeit perhaps benevolent), yet part of me

wondered nonetheless whether it is hubris to stubbornly hold onto those views and to counter the opinions of Rwandans who feel differently, especially the young people who feel like progress is going well and insist that they themselves feel empowered.

Ultimately, I preferred to prioritize humility and deference for their viewpoints and to share them in my results. I concluded there is something to be said, even sociopolitically, for the idea that perception is reality—those young Rwandans demonstrate extraordinary leadership qualities and agency, thus acting as empowered and free individuals because they honestly believe that they *are*. To some degree, my opinion of whether they actually are or are not as "free" as they imagine is irrelevant, if they are able to move forward successfully in their lives.

This notion challenges whether I myself truly believe in Sen's (1998) aforementioned concept of true development being about expanding capabilities and choices. If I do believe it, then I must concede that based on the individuals I met, Rwanda (and Kagame as its leader) has been very successful in its process of recent development. Navigating this thorny issue in my relationships with Rwandans and in the conclusions I drew during my study certainly tested my commitment to decolonizing methodological ethics.

The interactive interview approach. Regarding the use of the interactive interview approach, I concur that having embraced more relaxed, authentic conversations rather than stiff interviews with only prewritten questions resulted in not only deeper enrichment on my part, but also on the part of my participants. The people with whom I spoke were those invested in the M.A. program and/or in Rwandan peacebuilding at large, and so having the opportunity to verbally process some of their feelings, impressions and concerns about the program offered a chance to crystallize their own ideas as well.

Use of multilingual resources via a local transcriptionist. As I noted in the design and procedures section above, I decided to coordinate with a young recent graduate of the UR who was interested in peace education, and to hire him as the transcriptionist for most of my interviews. In this way, I sought to incorporate a collaborative approach to making sense of the interview data, alongside sending the interviewees their transcripts later on and allowing them to add, amend or request removal for any comments they had made.

Unfortunately, what I discovered as I received Martin's transcriptions was that there were so many mistakes and misunderstandings of the audio recordings that I essentially had to go back and review each transcription myself, a process that took many months, since I was returning to a full-time job and a critically ill family member immediately after my field work.

However, I do not blame Martin for this issue—I took a risk employing a young and less experienced (but enthusiastic and intelligent) Rwandan who had never transcribed audio recordings before. By the time I realized his work would not be up to par and would require substantial editing, it felt too late to retract the original contract. Martin was a recent graduate who needed the money he had been promised and whom I believe sincerely tried his best. As I learned by doing it myself in my free time, the work of transcription is tedious, draining and heavily detail oriented. Even doing it over a period of six months or more was challenging, yet Martin did similar work (without the benefit of the Trint (2019) software to do a first pass) for more than 80% of the interviews, in less than two months.

Perhaps I could have rushed through the process once I was at the point of completing it on my own, but I was committed to ensuring that any quote I might attribute to my participants was accurate, and that the transcriptions I shared with them to review were as professional and

clear as possible. Despite the significant delay resulting from this snag, I still do not regret employing a native Rwandan to partner with me in this work. Such choices were part of the values I wanted to prioritize in doing this study at all.

That being said, if I had it to do over again, I would have accepted the cost of having a professional transcriptionist based in the United States do a second round of transcribing and checking Martin's versions for errors, even though I had used the bulk of my savings to do my field work in Rwanda during an unpaid leave. Accepting such help as a necessary expenditure could have saved me months and would have meant that the conclusions I reached in Chapters 4 and 5 crystallized earlier in the process, rather than after more than a year had passed since my time in Rwanda.

Constructivist Grounded Theory as a Driver of Data Analysis Choices

I will briefly describe the degree to which both my choice of tools and my approach during the synthesis of the data were exemplars of CGT strategies.

Coding with consciousness of my subjectivity. To be candid, by the time I reached the analysis stage, I was unfortunately running short on time to do coding as thoroughly as I would have preferred. However, the grandchild codes represent the most frequent and salient themes that revealed themselves during what time I had. The rest of the rich conclusions that could be drawn from these data will need to wait for additional research and analysis that will be considered outside the scope of this doctoral study. I did indeed take pains to ensure that I cross-coded and added memos in Dedoose (2018) in such a way as to take my own positionality into account, rather than pretending it wasn't a factor in the decision-making process.

There is some overlap between the priorities of decolonizing methodology in CGT when it comes to the importance of capturing and emphasizing one's positionality. CGT in particular encourages embracing that subjective point of view, and simply making it explicit and intentional as part of the analysis. With that in mind, I did indeed take steps to ensure that I took detailed field notes while in-country to capture my self-reflection as I experienced Rwanda and conducted the study. Additionally, I had frequent recorded debriefing sessions with Dr. Elizabeth C. Reilly for the two and a half weeks during which we were both in Rwanda doing our work.

However, I was not entirely successful in the use of field notes because of a technical snag that occurred about two weeks into my visit. Prior to my decision to use a recording app on my phone to capture audio field notes, I had been writing up digital field notes by using an ongoing draft email in my personal email account. Unfortunately, I realized too late that such a method of capturing ongoing impressions is inherently vulnerable when I accidentally hit "discard" and the long record of my thoughts for the first two weeks in-country disappeared. I spent hours trying to retrieve it, even enlisting assistance from a friend who worked for the company that created the email service but was ultimately unsuccessful.

I remember feeling genuine grief over the loss of those impressions, since even if I tried to recreate them, they could never be quite as authentic and raw as when I had originally written them. However, I am proud to say that after the initial shock passed, I demonstrated adaptability and resilience and chose to take what had happened as a lesson in the importance of choosing the proper tools and mediums for doing CGT-style reflections.

Caution about being so deferential as to lose my own voice. I must readily admit that as far as maintaining my own voice and perspective as a CGT-informed embrace of subjectivity,

I had mixed success. My advisor observed in me (as I did in myself) that I often became overly apologetic or hesitant in both my interactions in the field and even sometimes in my presentation of findings. One poignant example came when I found out towards the end of my time in Rwanda that I could indeed have been more pointed in asking participants about their experience during the Genocide. I had assumed (wrongly as it turns out) that such a question would be taboo and inappropriate, and in so doing, lost a key thread of context for the study.

Similarly, although I showed boldness and confidence in my outreach to a variety of individuals and was able to elicit candid conversation, I nonetheless found myself behaving in an overly deferential way with certain high-level authority figures, wondering whether my "lowly" status as a student would make spending time with me less valuable in their eyes. With some interviewees, I even caught myself using mannerisms often associated in recent years with overabundance of female humility specifically. Although not explicitly mentioned in the CGT literature I have been exposed to, I find myself concerned that some of the force of my own voice and presence in those interactions was diminished by such unconscious behaviors.

Member checks of interviews and use of direct quotes. Again, a time crunch played a role in my utilization of this CGT strategy. As I noted in the design and procedures section, I did email each and every participant with a final transcript of their interview, along with any follow-up questions I had and a reiteration of the idea that they were welcome to point out passages they wanted to clarify or remove. I also mentioned that if I did not hear from them within two weeks, I would assume tacit consent to use their particular transcript as it was.

However, because it took me almost a year to complete the interview transcription process, it is understandable that many participants simply did not respond to my message;

indeed, I would likely have been more successful in soliciting detailed responses if the interviews had been fresher in their minds, rather than a distant memory. Ultimately, five of the thirty study participants provided clarification or removed a portion of their dialogue from the transcription, while eight individuals responded to my initial email or reminder with approval pf the transcript without any suggested changes, and 17 never responded to my initial email or reminder, thus granting tacit approval for use of their transcripts.

As to the use of direct quotes as a CGT strategy, this tactic is an area in which I can confidently assert I have done justice to the intent of the methodology. After I analyzed and coded the raw data and was able to formulate patterns and trends, I then spent a great deal of time intentionally crafting Chapter 4's report of that data such that the individuals I interviewed would all be represented as clearly and accurately as possible, in their own words. Each person is quoted at least once, with some quoted over 20 times (usually with those quoted less frequently being primarily affiliated with civil society peacebuilding rather than with the M.A. program at the UR). It is these direct quotes that form the foundation of my own conclusions and researcher recommendations, thus ensuring I have embraced CGT in the analysis process.

Methodological Conclusions

Because the M.A. program in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation has never before been documented or had its story widely disseminated, I must acknowledge an enormous privilege—especially as a foreigner—to highlight the amazing and important things that Rwandans are doing, both within this program and in similar arenas, in the service of peace and reconciliation. I only hope that this chapter's description of the methodological choices I made in how to share this extraordinary story has done justice to the program and the people involved.

CHAPTER 4

STUDY FINDINGS

What follows are the results and findings from data I collected in order to answer the research questions presented in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. The study used interviews conducted with 30 faculty members, administrators, and alumnae of the University of Rwanda (UR) M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program, along with practitioners doing peace work in other arenas of Rwandan society. I was able to triangulate these conversations with both my notes from the field and recorded debriefings with my advisor.

Additionally, I incorporated a decolonizing, self-reflective methodology that took my personal positionality into account when synthesizing these data and mining for trends and patterns, then later (as Chapter 5 will elucidate) when drawing conclusions and developing recommendations. The interviews addressed participants' opinions and experiences of the M.A. program, the Centre for Conflict Management (CCM) where the program is housed, and the UR more broadly, but also examined the personal experiences that drew them to peace work, as well as their aspirations for future leadership in peacebuilding.

Following a reminder of the research questions and purpose, a brief introduction to the sociopolitical context of the University of Rwanda (UR) within Rwandan society, and a preview of the 12 findings of the study, this chapter will be divided into three sections, each of which pertains to one of my three research questions and the discourse theme with which it is aligned. The goal of each section is to synthesize the data I collected relevant to the corresponding question/theme. Specifically, these sections will address the following:

- Intended (and reported) impact of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program and, more broadly, the UR Centre for Conflict Management (CCM);
- Implementation strategies the M.A. program has embraced to further CCM's goals in light of the particular constraints and tradeoffs they face; and
- Insights that the UR M.A. program and CCM can offer the fields of peace education and educational leadership

These data will be presented in subsections for each cluster of interview questions, which have also been mapped to their corresponding research questions and discourse themes.

Restatement of Purpose and Research Questions

The purposes of this study were threefold:

- To co-create a data-rich, nuanced narrative of the vision administrators, faculty members, and students have for how the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program might contribute to Rwandan peace and stability (and to compare those visions to the goals of leaders doing peace work in other arenas of Rwandan society);
- To uncover the strategies being used by University stakeholders (i.e., teaching faculty members, administrators, and alumni) affiliated with the program to implement and improve it in a manner that they deem successful, along with the constraints and tradeoffs these decision makers face; and

- To triangulate my research with existing literature on goals, pedagogies, and best practices of peace education and educational leadership in order to glean lessons for other programs, including those in the United States.

My methodology was developed specifically to address the unique nature of this study's particular research questions and corresponding discourse themes. As a reminder to the reader, they were also threefold:

1) IMPACT (Intended and Actual): How do University of Rwanda administrators, faculty members, and alumni affiliated with the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation envision the program's contribution to the development of leaders who will prioritize and be equipped to maintain peace and stability?

    1a) How are these insider perspectives of the M.A. program different from those of leaders engaged in peacebuilding outside the M.A. program?

    - Discourse Theme #1: Higher education is integral to sustainable development and peace, especially in postconflict countries.

2) IMPLEMENTATION: How are educational leaders and other stakeholders making decisions related to achieving program goals? (e.g., What strategies are being employed? What constraints and tradeoffs do they face? What mission drove the program's evolution?)

    - Discourse Theme #2: There are unique structural challenges for higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa.

3) INSIGHTS: From the perspective of study participants, what lessons can the M.A. program offer the fields of peace education and educational leadership?

- Discourse Theme #3: Critical peace education offers a constructive response to structural violence.

The research questions and corresponding discourse themes effectively identified both the overarching strengths and systemic challenges that constitute the inspiring story of the UR M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation. Data collection from the study provided a treasure trove of relevant information, as outlined in the Preview of Findings section and further delineated in the Presentation of Detailed Study Findings section.

Sociopolitical Context of the University of Rwanda Within Rwandan Society

The University of Rwanda is the only major public tertiary institution in the country, which has kept it highly visible in the public eye throughout its existence. That being said, the University of Rwanda as it currently operates has only existed for six years; the UR is the result of a merger into one consolidated university of seven previously independent public institutions, including the former National University of Rwanda (NUR) founded in 1963, the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology (KIST), the Kigali Institute of Education (KIE), the Higher Institute of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, the School of Finance and Banking (SFB), the Higher Institute of Umutara Polytechnic (UP), and the Kigali Health Institute (KHI) (Rutayisire, 2013).

The official rationale for this sea change in policy and practice was to eliminate redundancies and duplication of efforts (not to mention funding) in order to make Rwandan scholarship more competitive and robust in the global sphere of academia (Kyama & Kabeera, 2011). However, an important component of rigor and integrity in higher education has long been argued to be the protection of academic freedom (AAUP, 1940/1977), yet this goal

assumes a degree of necessary separation from other arenas of power—government in particular.

When a public institution relies on its nation's government for funding, legal protections, and policy support, the protection of academic freedom can indeed be compromised. Although it is unclear whether this compromise has been the case at the UR, it should be noted that many of its senior managers since the merger have also held positions of high responsibility within the Rwandan Government (GoR), particularly within the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC), and are often well-known as elite influencers in Rwanda and even close advisors of President Paul Kagame (Kwibuka, 2013).

Like other sectors in Rwandan society, the benefits and drawbacks of such an interdependent university/government system are often debated, both within Rwanda and (often) as critique from outsiders. However, given that the entire university system collapsed after the Genocide—with the UNR being closed for a full year afterwards—it may well be that the GoR found it prudent to maintain deep involvement with tertiary education structures in order to prevent such widespread collapse from recurring.

Indeed, according to one of my participants from MINEDUC's Higher Education Council (HEC), there were less than 2,000 university graduates each year throughout the 1960s, and this number had stagnated in 1994 because of the Genocide; however, (regardless of which officials or policies deserve credit) the number of graduates produced by Rwandan HLIs has steadily increased in the 25 years since (Micomyiza, S. P.).

Nonetheless, even if the close ties between the UR and the GoR have been fruitful for academic progress, the degree to which the University at large (and perhaps even the Centre for

Conflict Management and the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation) are influenced by the country's political agenda remains unclear. The debate around this issue has been nuanced and merits further discussion and investigation but was outside the scope of this particular study's goals.

Preview of Findings

While coding my interview data, I was able to organize emergent themes into three groupings by research question (RQ), as aligned with a discourse theme (DT) and a subset of interview questions (IQs). Within each of these three umbrella categories, based on trends that became apparent during coding, I then created three "clusters" per grouping (nine in total).

Using the scaffolding of these nine clusters, 12 primary findings ultimately rose to the fore as answers to my three research questions, with three falling under the first grouping (RQ1—DT1—IQ7-12), six falling under the second grouping (RT2—DT2—IQ13-20), and three falling under the third grouping (RQ3—DT3—IQ21-24).

The 12 overarching findings of this study are outlined below and are discussed in significantly more detail in the Presentation of Detailed Study Findings section. As a guide to the reader, Appendix G also offers a summary view of the 12 findings and how they stem directly from the three groupings referred to above.

Grouping 1 (IMPACT): RQ1—DT 1—IQ7-12.

The first three findings fall under the first grouping and address both the intended and actual impact of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation Program.

1. The M.A. program seeks to inculcate students with specific themes, values, and skills, including an **equal valuation of theory and practice,** along with a deep **understanding of structural violence** as a driver of conflict.

2. The M.A. program nurtures students' effectiveness in social justice advocacy and deep community engagement by enlarging their sense of **ethical responsibility to others** and by emphasizing the importance of **critical thinking**.

3. The M.A. program envisions itself as producing alumnae who embody the 10 UR **Graduate Attributes**, but even more importantly, being a catalyst for their **personal transformation** as peace leaders.

Grouping 2 (IMPLEMENTATION): RQ2—DT2—IQ13-20.

The next six findings fall under the second grouping and shed light on the implementation of the M.A. program, including its attendant decisions and controversies.

4. The logistics of the M.A. program's design were informed by an **expansion of CCM's mandate** from the production of knowledge to the dissemination of knowledge, but this **evolution required partnership** with both UR entities and foreign institutions.

5. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (**SIDA**) has been the program's most significant partner; however, M.A. program leaders have embraced the borrowing of best practices, while remaining **grounded in local realities**.

6. Since its inception, the M.A. program has invited **small cohorts of working adults** with significant experience and is designed to be **modular and part-time** to accommodate their participation.

7. The M.A. program has transitioned from gearing recruitment efforts towards only an initially limited number of institutions to later **offering an open call** to attract a broader target student body and has similarly gone from having primarily foreign professors to hiring **mostly Rwandan faculty** members.

8. As far as inequities, the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation offers **no subsidization of student tuition**, which means there are necessarily **socioeconomic limitations** to who can realistically participate. Similarly, although the M.A. program has close to **gender parity among the students**, there remains a **mostly male staff** among both CCM and UR faculty members and administrators.

9. In dealing with students, the M.A. program encourages differences of opinion via faculty members who embrace being **facilitators (rather than transmitters) of learning** and respect the expertise of students. Among program staff, it is difficult to gauge how conflict resolution is handled, due to an extremely **complex and hierarchical organizational structure**, and widespread **distaste for public complaint** in Rwandan culture generally.

Grouping 3 (INSIGHTS): RQ3—DT3—IQ21-24.

The final three findings deal with insights the fields of peace education and educational leadership can glean from the M.A. program.

10. Regarding perceptions of M.A. program success, **alumnae expressed strong satisfaction** with their experiences, with only a few caveats, while faculty members and administrators from **CCM demonstrated great pride** in the program's accomplishments, only noting the strong need for

more rigorous self-evaluation, and those **outside of CCM offered admiration** for program goals and achievements in influencing Rwandan peacebuilding.

11. Stakeholders in the M.A. program offered numerous **suggestions for improvement, primarily focused on program sustainability** that tended to fall under **four main themes**: 1) Increase program accessibility to students, financially and logistically, 2) Create deeper partnerships with relevant organizations, 3) Emphasize psychosocial well-being in both content and support structures, and 4) Expand investment in completion of Rwandan Ph.D.s, post-docs, and high-quality publications.

12. The M.A. program offers many insights for the fields of peace education and educational leadership; however, the most frequent refrain that ran through most stakeholder discussions was the idea that **peace is a continuous journey** requiring ongoing investment and self-reflection, and that Rwandans embody this idea through strong collective **ownership over programs and progress**.

These findings represent the core answers to the three research questions motivating this investigation. Please see Appendix G (Study Throughline: Research Questions, Discourse Themes, Interview Questions, Findings, and Recommendations) as a shorthand reference for the alignment of these twelve findings with the three research questions, three discourse themes, and 18 non-demographic interview questions.

Presentation of Detailed Study Findings

Each of the three sections below encompasses three of its own clusters of interview questions (IQs), which offer nuance to the research question/discourse theme under which they are situated. The connection between these findings and the existing discourse will be considered in greater detail in Chapter 5.

The first section addresses participant responses regarding Research Question 1—the M.A. program's intended and actual impact. I will outline the three subsection clusters that address this impact related to: (a) IQ7-8: Inculcating students with key themes, values and skills; (b) IQ9-10: Nurturing social justice advocacy and deep community engagement; and (c) IQ11-12: Inspiring students with a coherent and empowering vision.

The second section presents interviewee perspectives that address Research Question 2—the implementation of the M.A. program in terms of leadership decision making and strategies used in the face of resource constraints. This section will elaborate on three subsection clusters, specifically: (a) IQ13-15: Logistics of program design and support from partnerships; (b) IQ16-18: Decisions affecting student diversity, equity, and gender parity; and (c) IQ19-20: Mechanisms for addressing differences of opinion and conflict resolution.

The third section summarizes stakeholders' viewpoints related to Research Question 3—the insights offered by the M.A. program for the fields of peace education and educational leadership. Here I will explain how three subsection clusters address this overarching issue of insights to be drawn from this case study, including the following: (a) IQ21: Perceptions of success; (b) IQ22: Suggestions for improvement; and (c) IQ23-24: Unique characteristics and misconceptions.

Research Question/Discourse Theme 1 and Interview Questions 7-12: IMPACT

What follows are the common threads I observed emerging from interviews that shed light on the question of the M.A. program's impact, both intended and actual. This impact was largely conceived of from three interrelated angles: first, via the key themes, values and skills the program sought to impart to its students, second, via the methods used to strengthen students' abilities in social justice advocacy and community engagement, and third, via the inspiration with which the program sought to empower students by sharing a coherent vision of progress.

IQ7-8: Inculcating students with key themes, values, and skills. These two interview questions asked the following: What critical themes or issues did the developers of the M.A. program believe needed to be included? AND What values and skills does the M.A. program

seek to instill in its students? This section will elucidate the specific modules and courses mentioned by study participants, followed by a summary of the two primary issues that emerged as high priority for coverage in the M.A. program, namely an equal valuation of theory and practical application and structural violence as a driver of conflict.

Specific courses and modules. I preface this discussion by pointing out that publicly available, easily searchable information about the courses that students take in the program is not posted on the UR website. In fact, the main CCM website about the M.A. program is only one page that includes a brief paragraph about the program's vision (see IQ11-12, p. 127, for additional discussion) and a list of nine modules taught in the program as of 2015, when the webpage was last copywritten. It does not specify whether this list is comprehensive or has changed since the program's inception.

The webpage also emphasized that "the taught modules also stress topics like prospects for peace, coexistence and cooperation between peoples on top of the regular curriculum" (UR, 2015). Although these themes would seem obvious given the nature of the degree program and therefore unnecessary to explicitly mention, it does reveal something about the ethos of the program that I found similarly reflected in the attitudes of my participants. The aforementioned website then goes on to list the nine modules specifically as follows:

1. Introduction to the Field of Peace and Development;
2. Research Methods in Social Sciences;
3. Global Systems;
4. Understanding Conflicts;
5. Economic Policies, Poverty, and Natural Resources in Conflict;
6. Conflict Resolution and Peace Building;
7. Reconciliation and Justice: Theories and Practice;
8. Project Design, Management, and Evaluation;
9. Thesis. (UR, 2015)

Despite searching independently and asking various administrators and faculty members, I never was able to locate syllabi for these modules.

However, I was able to supplement this admittedly sparse documentation with information from my study participants. While a few overarching topics came up again and again with interviewees, their comments also yielded a list of courses (or modules)—albeit incomplete—that have been taught in the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program at various times in the past decade or so, in many cases towards the earlier years of the program. These topics, although not an exhaustive list, include the following:

- Demography and Conflict Resolution,
- Peace Education,
- Leadership,
- Transitional Justice (co-offered with the School of Law),
- Public Security and Rule of Law,
- Sustainable Development and Human Security,
- Women and Peacebuilding (noted by one alumna as very good but quite short),
- International Relations/Politics (also noted by a student as receiving comparatively shorter coverage),
- Memorialization,
- Public Policy Analysis, and
- Organizational Psychology.

A few other themes that came to light during conversations with faculty members and alumnae, without the course name being specified, included such topics as the linkages between languages and peacebuilding, international legal and justice mechanisms (sometimes as part of the Global systems module), as well as the historical background, motivations behind and theoretical approaches to studying the Genocide. One longtime professor in the program particularly noted examples of modules that were developed in partnership with the Swedish

International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), including Theories of Development, Conflict Analysis, and Humanitarian Work.

Equal valuation of theory and practical application. Students and CCM leaders alike agreed that one of the crucial ways in which the M.A. program prepares students for peace leadership is by emphasizing the important balance between theory and practice. One alumna even explained to me that for Rwandans in particular, they possess such a deep, intimate knowledge of conflict dynamics from having suffered through the Genocide that learning theories of conflict are not only intellectually enlightening, but also emotionally validating.

However, she also cautioned that because most Rwandans have practical experience of violence and the peace that came after, some people (politicians in particular) might assume there is no need for a theoretical or academic lens in peacebuilding. She explained that if you are Rwandan, "you pretend to know everything, but sometimes there are mistakes in discourse . . . in the approach you are using . . . mistakes you may make without knowing. Because it's so trivial talking about peace" (Alumna C, S. P.). But in fact, her high esteem for the theories undergirding peacebuilding was shared by nearly every one of my study participants.

One of the program faculty members, now active on the legal side of Genocide prevention, similarly emphasized the comfort Rwandans may feel upon learning that their personal trauma is echoed in broad concepts about conflict and its aftermath yet returned to the importance of grounding reactions to conflict in those theories, not just experience.

He elaborated that "for people, it's something important to have experiences, but at the same time, you have to move to formalize something, to put it into a concept, and that concept will be a focal point of everything" (CCM Faculty A, S. P.). He added that such a unique

situation makes for very interesting classroom dynamics and adds a layer of complexity for the instructor that can be invigorating.

Another longtime faculty member agreed with his colleague's emphasis on theory, but made the argument for the other side as well, saying that as peace educators, "you are in a field where you will have to contribute to the recovery of society, because we are not dealing with only looking for researchers; we are also training activists, practitioners. So, this is a must to have both" (CCM Faculty F, S. P.). The CCM Coordinator agreed, even referencing the three pillars on which CCM was founded, and saying that "in our Centre, for example, research, teaching, community outreach, they may sound different, but they complement each other. That's why my ideal group of students—I need students who really like research . . . not only academic research, but also policy research" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.). He explained that such a balanced orientation made students more effective contributing members of their cohorts to learning.

A third faculty member participant echoed this sentiment wholeheartedly, with special emphasis on how she, as a Westerner, adapted to the Rwandan context; she recounted that "I had to rethink the way I used to teach . . . for me, it was a compelling experience" (UR Faculty A, S. P.). She added the caveat that although sometimes the theoretical bases are still lacking in Rwandan publications because of heavy practical emphasis, Western academia on the other hand is "really in a golden tower [and] sometimes it's frustrating, because at the end of the day, what are we using that for? It's fascinating to create new theories and debate, but I also feel like here everything has application" (UR Faculty A, S. P.).

In fact, even one of the UR administrators, with deep experience in other sectors outside academia, commented in no uncertain terms about the prevailing attitude in scholarly circles that one must be either an academic or a practitioner; he said

> that model cannot work here. I mean, at the beginning, I would say that it was not really different [for us] as a university. At the beginning, we were focusing much more on academic staff to do the Ph.D. But right now, we also say, "look, other people have the skills, so they can also do research." So, we have people from, for example, the Ministry of Health [and] people in the Rwanda Agriculture Board who are doing Ph.D.s as well with us. (UR Administrator F, S. P.)

And so I found it with every study participant, in every organization I was exposed to in Rwanda, but certainly in CCM: there was a unanimous agreement (usually explicitly stated) that theories are needed to elucidate the Rwandan experience and place it in a broader context, especially for students developing their leadership capacity, but that in order for this strategy to be effective, their learning must always be tailored towards what is useful for work in the field.

Structural violence as a driver of conflict. Although numerous course titles and themes reflect this concept of structural violence and how the causes of conflict can change over time, this overarching concept was referenced by study participants again and again as a priority for M.A. program content—specifically the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation. For example, one current CCM leader who also did the "sandwich" Ph.D. program in Sweden remarked on how critical it is to help student distinguish among what constitutes peace versus conflict, explaining that

> based on what we read, conflicts or postconflict violence [are] where people are using guns, but I don't think we had captured different conflicts . . . what about organizational conflicts? Don't we have such things in organizations? What about preventing? . . . That's not the classical way of understanding conflicts. (CCM Faculty E, S. P.)

Similarly, two other longtime CCM professors also deeply involved in civil society leadership stressed the importance of pushing students to consider the political and organizational

grievances that cause citizen unrest over time if left unaddressed, such as the inclusiveness of the social welfare process, or development at large.

An alumna reinforced this priority when referencing how she herself had learned in the M.A. program to expand her thinking on catalysts for extreme violence and even terrorism, that the perpetrators become tired of life and feel they have nothing to lose "because they think nobody is listening to them" and so such dynamics are critical "to address from all angles in a holistic way" (Alumna A, S. P.), a viewpoint expressed almost verbatim by another CCM leader.

One former UR administrator and faculty member who was now more involved in civil society peace work also echoed this student's sentiment about the necessity of holistic approaches to constructive conflict analysis by commenting that it is important to "understand who is behind those systems from micro to [macro], to measure those groups' sociological processes . . . and how those levels [are] communicating vertically and horizontally" (UR Administrator H, S. P.).

Related to level of leaderships in conflicts, another faculty member who now serves in a GoR Genocide prevention agency reminded me that a great many *genocidaires* were, in fact, leaders in key government roles, including Intelligence, as well as in University decision making roles. This chilling reality implies that the structural violence that had been building in Rwandan society had deeply impacted not just ordinary people, but also educated and powerful people, and so he stressed that prevention of violence requires teaching students to ask

> What is key for leadership? What is needed for good leadership? It's not about degree, Doctor, or Professor in this-and-this. Yes, it's very helpful, but you also need to know that you have to understand situations that can degenerate into Genocide or conflict. (CCM Faculty A, S. P.)

He argued, along with another current CCM administrator, that only in this way can the institutional flaws and procedural inequities that lead to violence be remedied over time.

This likeminded CCM scholar expressed enthusiasm about the M.A. program as an opportunity to impart to students that "there is a difference between individual conflict and structural conflict, cultural conflict, . . . and all those elements, in fact, are needed to answer [our] context. . . . Rwanda is really a laboratory of all kinds of conflict!" (CCM Faculty C, S. P.).

He concluded that guiding students through these various levels of analysis exposes them to the links between various kinds of "hot" and "cold" conflict, along with enabling them to see connections between peace and areas they may not have considered before, such as food security and livelihoods—areas where ethnicity and other surface differences are often a scapegoat for problems with economic inequities at the root. A fellow CCM professor similarly argued

> Peace, okay, . . . but when does it start? When does it end? [For example], environmental conflict—did we have it in Rwanda, I don't know, 70 years ago? I don't think so. . . . things are changed. That's why we care about *transforming* conflicts. (CCM Faculty E, S. P.)

Indeed, the transformation of conflicts via critical examination of the structural drivers that contribute to those conflicts proved to be an oft repeated and pervasive theme in my discussions.

IQ9-10: Nurturing social justice advocacy and deep community engagement. These two interview questions asked the following: How do you envision the role of the M.A. program in preparing leaders to embrace their role as advocates for social justice? AND How does the M.A. program prepare leaders to engage ethically and effectively with communities? I will use this section to present the two themes that rose to the fore when I asked interviewees how the M.A. program specifically prepares its students to advocate for and support communities, including an emphasis on ethical responsibility to others, and the importance of critical thinking.

Ethical responsibility to others. As a corollary to the centrality of key themes that need coverage in the M.A. program, many interviewees also mentioned the importance of altruism as a guiding principle for students' embodiment of those themes, specifically what moral obligations individuals have in conflict settings. For example, one CCM faculty member now doing his Ph.D. and present since the program's inception commented that "peace education looks at all forms of violence, and you try to look at it in terms of what could be my contribution to transforming this situation" (CCM Faculty B, S. P.).

Another CCM faculty member took this attitude a step further by commenting on the challenge of expanding students' sense of duty to protect beyond typical boundaries, saying that the prevailing tendency, even in other Sub-Saharan African countries, can be to think that "if a few people in Rwanda are suffering, it's okay because the most important is Africa. It's not because they hate Rwanda. But I think superpowers should go beyond this way of peacekeeping" (CCM Faculty G, S. P.).

He explained that many globalized problems such as the worldwide refugee crisis are evidence of the need to consider beyond one's national borders, even if that priority must always take some precedence. A fellow CCM administrator offered a third supporting perspective, reminding me that for Genocide to have happened to a society, something has gone terribly amiss, that

> the humanity in people has been eroded. Now we have a duty—not only as a university, but as a nation—to build that peace, to bring back the humanity, and the nature of feeling that you are a human being, and you need to have not only peace with your neighbor, with your kin, with your relatives, but also with anybody who comes by. . . . When it comes to peace, when it comes to security, each of us need it at the same level, like any other person. We need to treat each other respectively, peacefully, because we are, at the end of the day, having the same threats. . . . We all need peace. (UR Administrator D, S. P.)

This empathy based on the interconnectedness of people, regardless of background or national origin was a strong theme that many cited as a high priority for the M.A. program, and based on the frequency with which interviewees raised the subject, seemed to be of paramount importance to them as people.

However, many participants did acknowledge the inherent difficulty in ensuring that students who are part of the program assume such a broad ethical responsibility to their fellow man. For example, one faculty member also serving in an administrative role pointed out that he and his colleagues obviously hope students will leave the program with core knowledge to the field, such as understanding the legal basis of calling actions "Genocide" or the difference between institutions like the International Criminal Court and the International Court of Justice, but that "whether that transmits a feeling of wanting to promote peace, because of the things the student has learnt in the program, that's another thing" (UR Administrator E, S. P.), and that such an inner outcome can be much harder to assess, much less guarantee.

One interviewee working in the Higher Education Council similarly acknowledged the need to strive for graduates who embrace a duty to serve others broadly, even if it's challenging, summarizing his position that

> in the end, we are training for the country, but also because the way we define quality assurance in Rwanda is that you should be fit for purpose and internationally credible. . . . So, we should have graduates who serve, who respond to the country's needs, but also should be relevant beyond [our borders]. . . . So, that's the challenge. (GoR Leader A, S. P.)

This goal may sound lofty, especially for a university in Sub-Saharan Africa with the usual resource constraints, but he was far from alone in embracing such high expectations. One administrator, present since before the M.A. program began, assented that "we see them as

change agents. They will go out and change the lives of other people, using the skills that we have given them as a university" (UR Administrator F, S. P.).

As this discussion has been demonstrating, UR leaders do not imagine their graduates as being only narrowly focused on their own small spheres of influence, or even in only obvious peacebuilding arenas. Another CCM administrator reminded me that "peacebuilding here is broad. . . . Peace in terms of what? Is it leadership? . . . What about helping your institution—their respective institutions—to do business better? Here we are talking about peace" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.). Indeed, the idea of "spillover effects" from subtler variables like organizational cohesion, transparency of accounting, and servant leadership on peace writ large came up again and again when participants addressed what it means to fulfill one's moral obligation to others.

Several comments indicated that the University itself seems to be trying to model this expanded notion of ethical responsibility to one's fellow man. One high-level administrator who has taught in the M.A. program pointed out that

> we are not an NGO; we are an academic institution. So, primarily I think the responsibility is on being able to deliver knowledge . . . but we would really want to see that whatever we are doing is contributing to developing Rwanda—not only the material development, but also the stability. (UR Administrator E, S. P.)

Importance of critical thinking. According to my interviewees, intertwined with the need to consider others in one's peace leadership is the paramount importance of strengthening one's critical thinking skills, in order to be effective in that work. One UR administrator actually argued that critical thinking is, in fact, crucial for not only ethical leadership, but also employability in virtually any sector. He described a frequent problem in Rwanda wherein University graduates have seemingly impressive CVs, but then are given a sample problem to address in a job interview,

> and they flounder because we haven't taught them in that way. . . . And producing thousands of people like that is not going to contribute to the growth of this country. So, we have to do things quite differently, and it means that as academics, you have to do scary stuff. . . . We have to be brave and [ask ourselves] "how are we going to develop critical thinking among the students?" And that's your starting point for thinking about the development and delivery of your course, you know? (UR Administrator A, S. P.)

Unfortunately, although individual instructors with whom I spoke were enthusiastic about the integration of critical thinking into their courses, they confirmed that there is not yet a systemwide protocol for doing so at all levels of schooling, or even at the University of Rwanda.

To that end, one M.A. program alumna working in peace education in early childhood raised this issue and concluded that critical thinking is

> not yet where we wish it to be, but at least the Teacher recognizes that [each] student has the right to express his or her mind, and that doesn't mean to not obey, [but] the problem is in the way teachers are taught! (Alumna B, S. P.)

Despite this challenge, another participant directly involved in the advancement of peace education in the Rwandan K12 system confirmed that teacher training and preservice workshops are the next frontier being tackled in an effort to infuse critical thinking into peace education mainstreaming at earlier levels, and thus ultimately into the higher education sphere.

Also notable on this topic was a discussion I had with two young professionals I interviewed, both of whom are alumnae of other UR programs and currently engaged in peacebuilding at NGOs. They focused on critical thinking with more time and enthusiasm than virtually any other issue, commenting that the lack of such a mindset has caused problems all over Africa, including examples of violent rebel groups like Boko Haram whereby vulnerable fighters may believe they stand to gain materially but are largely taking great risk to benefit someone else's interests more powerful than they. Thus, these young men argued, the lack of critical thinking

> creates the problem that people have too much obedience, because they don't dare to question. . . . In fact, the occurrence of the Genocide itself was due to the lack of critical thinking. You go and kill your

> neighbor, confidently feeling that you are not killing a person; you are not killing a human being—they said it's a snake. . . . That was the lack of critical thinking to the highest level. So, that's what we were trying to do at least, to see if the postgenocide generation would be more critical than the experience we got from the past. (CSO Leader H, S. P.)

The "experience from the past" he references is his own schooling, and that of his fellow study participants, both of whom, when asked if they had learned critical thinking in their K12 years, vehemently insisted that it had actually been the opposite.

Both gentlemen stated that they themselves had learned critical thinking in their exposure to peace-related trainings, particularly those with an international bent. The value of such global interactions is a subject I will return to multiple times later in this chapter and the next. That being said, the other young man present for this discussion asserted that "a good critical thinker respects a person only when he deserves it. . . . No one has a right to obedience, . . . and no one is obliged to obey" (CSO Leader F, S. P.).

Neither young man mentioned having been encouraged in critical thinking at the University of Rwanda, even though both were enrolled there within the past five years (albeit not as part of the M.A. program). This absence was notable, given that they both linked critical thinking directly with peace education in our conversation, with one of them arguing that

> for our society—anywhere, actually!—if you want people to be less violent, you should encourage critical thinking. . . . These three pillars are very important: empathy, tolerance and critical thinking! These are very key if you want to talk about peace education, and also learning from the past. (CSO Leader F, S. P.)

Yet other comments from interviewees hinted that this dearth of focus at the UR thus far on critical thinking may not be across the board. For example, regarding the climate in UR classrooms, one of my participants (a Westerner who has been a longtime resident of Kigali and also a UR lecturer in gender studies) told me that she takes just such responsibility for encouraging critical thinking among her students, and believes that doing so is fundamental to

UR operating as a thriving institution. She, too, acknowledged that Rwandan society currently does not necessarily reward critical thinking, noting that the Government, employers and others

> want young people to propose things, but they should always be in line, [yet] criticism can also be constructive. . . . But especially in the University, we are scholars—I mean, we should be thinkers and everything. So, we should really encourage that culture, and also construct the University to make it better, to make it function, because it's the only public university. (UR Faculty A, S. P.)

Within the M.A. program itself, there were many faculty members and administrators who offered similar viewpoints about the importance of critical thinking to the student experience and to molding effective peace leaders in Rwanda. One longtime faculty member and civil society leader was optimistic when considering the progress on this front, claiming that despite the unthinkable tragedy of the Genocide, it catalyzed new willingness over the past generation to think outside the box and reevaluate assumptions "because this was not a thing that was common. We used to have mass killings, but the Genocide was something strange, new, so we had to begin anew—how to think, how to construct" (CCM Faculty F, S. P.).

Another CCM faculty member present for the program's founding, and also in hiding during the Genocide similarly acknowledged that Rwanda has a complex history, with many narratives and versions of what happened and why, and that educators at all levels—certainly those like the M.A.—need to be vigilant in asking "what is the truth? Should we tell children? That is the problem we have in peace education. And if we don't bring about this critical thinking, we will be kind of putting peace education in danger" (CCM Faculty G, S. P.).

In the same vein, yet a third faculty member, now researching such issues for his Ph.D., stated in no uncertain terms that

> education before the Genocide is considered to have contributed to shaping the behavior that came to be shown in the Genocide period. So, there is a lot of discussion that education failed, like other institutions failed. . . . So, with that, education after the Genocide had this kind of push and pressure to do things

> differently. . . . Because if you have more than two million people involved in killings, and most of these have gone to school, then you start asking yourself, "what are we teaching about?" (CCM Faculty B, S. P.)

One of my civil society participants contributing to peace education corroborated this trend in critical self-reflection by telling me a memorable story in which a high school mathematics teacher at one of her organization's trainings recounted her traumatic Genocide experience of being chased by her own students carrying machetes, then hiding behind a tree and thinking that for all her pride in bringing her pupils' grades up and helping them understand rigorous concepts, what good was any such educational effort if it came to that kind of a horrific end, if they could abandon basic principles of humanity without questioning why? (CSO Leader D, S. P.).

One civil society leader in particular expressed numerous impassioned comments about the importance of critical thinking, and when I further inquired about how the M.A. program might train students to become similar leaders capable of using critical thinking as a tool in their work, he said that students must

> be aware of when you have started to make distortions of reality with your interpretations. . . . Are your interpretations guided by the truth? Then, what are you recommending? You know, you are constructing a world. . . . What are our strengths, what are our weaknesses? (UR Administrator H, S. P.)

Such nuts-and-bolts details about how to model critical thinking in one's work were a frequent theme in many participants' responses, and thus, this skill was by far the most resonant of those my interviewees would like to see the M.A. program instill in its students to orient them towards social justice advocacy and community engagement.

IQ11-12: Inspiring students with a coherent and empowering vision. These two interview questions asked the following: Does the M.A. program have a coherent mission and vision? Is program leadership in agreement about these goals? AND Were there other peace education programs from which the M.A. program drew inspiration in its development and

conception? This section will address both the official CCM mandate in the context of broader University goals, particularly the UR Graduate Attributes, and—with those in mind—how the M.A. program envisions being a catalyst for students' deeply personal transformation as peace-oriented leaders, ready to make both a local and a global impact.

How the CCM mandate reflects the UR Graduate Attributes. As previously discussed, the M.A. program is hosted by the UR Centre for Conflict Management, whose activities as a whole are driven by a stated mission and vision. According to the CCM website, this mission is

> to address the knowledge gap in the field of Genocide, peace and conflict studies, and postconflict reconstruction through conducting research, teaching as well as community services in the form of policy research. (UR, 2015)

Indeed, these three arenas of focus are made concrete through CCM's three departments of Research, Academic Affairs, and Community Service. Similarly, the vision of CCM, as publicly declared, is "to be a centre of excellence for research and training in prevention and positive transformation of conflicts, and to be a centre of reference in Rwanda, the Great Lakes Region and beyond" (UR, 2015).

As we have already seen, this emphasis on locally practical, but internationally applicable outputs (including graduates) was evident in myriad ways throughout participant responses. However, this ethos was also aligned with the aspirations articulated by the University at large for the graduates it produces. From an official standpoint, the UR is very explicit about what values it hopes not only the M.A. students, but all students in the University will graduate having mastered and embraced. These values take the form of the 10 Graduate Attributes, documented on the UR Teaching and Learning website, and summarized with the announcement that "UR

has decided to equip its students with job-oriented skills, values and attitudes and to prepare them to meet the needs of the labour market" (UR, 2018b).

The stated rationale for launching the Graduate Attributes, according to this website, is to align the University mission with numerous national and international policies and strategies, including the "Human Resource Development and Knowledge-Based Economy" pillar in Rwanda Vision 2020 (Nkulu, 2005; Republic of Rwanda, 2000), requirements in the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2013-18 (EDPRS 2) to prioritize the enhancement of youth employability skills (MINECOFIN, 2019), and the two targets in Goal Eight: Decent Work and Economic Growth of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that aim for substantial reduction of the proportion of unemployed youth and the development/ operationalizing of a global strategy for youth employment by 2020 (UN, 2018b).

These 10 Graduate Attributes are presented in a visual format on the website, in the form of an interconnected, 11-part Venn diagram, with "Graduate Attributes" at the center, and surrounded by the following "circles" of attributes:

1. Personal, Intellectual, Professional Autonomy and Astuteness;
2. Employability and Career Development;
3. Global Citizenship;
4. Lifelong Learning;
5. Collaboration, Teamwork, and Leadership;
6. Research, Creativity, and Innovation, Scholarship and Enquiry;
7. Subject Knowledge and Professional Skills;
8. Communication and Information Literacy;
9. Ethical, Social, and Professional Understanding; and
10. Financial Literacy. (UR, 2018b)

It merits mention that whatever process, collaborative or otherwise, was responsible for creating, revising and finalizing these 10 Attributes is not publicly posted, so I cannot comment on why these characteristics in particular were chosen for inclusion.

However, numerous UR administrators leading at high levels with whom I spoke referenced the Graduate Attributes without prompting in our discussion of what priorities are especially important to the University and the M.A. program alike. For example, one leader reported to me that although

> the learning journey for students has typically been driven by ticking off the intended learning outcomes, . . . the University [also] has a set of underpinning values and principles. . . . We are nation-centered but student-focused. . . . We uphold honesty and trustworthiness and truth and accountability. So, there is a whole list of those principles that underpin everything we do enshrined in our Strategic Plan. (UR Administrator A, S. P.)

Apart from a penchant for order and structure, the UR prioritizes such alignment of big-picture goals because doing so facilitates the school's ability to produce adaptable graduates who stand ready to put such skills and attributes to good use in an incredibly wide variety of settings. One of the administrators responsible for CCM's partnerships defended the usefulness of these attributes by reminding me that

> our conceptualization of master's programs is to be able to train people to a higher level of critical analysis skills, to be able to understand even the research that is being done by qualified Ph.D.s or other researchers on what does this mean for their work, whether it is in peacekeeping missions, whether it is in civil society, whether it is in partnerships, because we have so many people graduating from those master's [programs] going to international jobs. So, what does that mean? You need people who can have that capacity to capture that. (UR Administrator F, S. P.)

Furthermore, the moral reasoning this leader hinted at as the impetus for developing the Graduate Attributes was in keeping with other assertions of what the M.A. program and the University at large value most.

Another high-level UR administrator pointed out that throughout history, in most revolutions that take place worldwide—whether violent or peaceful—young people have played a pivotal role. He mentioned the Arab Spring as an example, then turned his attention to the Rwandan context, explaining that

> Now, if you look at what happened here during the Genocide, young people were involved in the killings--not all, but some. On the other hand, if you look at the army that liberated the people, it was also full of young people. The difference is the kind of leadership each group was exposed to. . . . Those who are exposed to the wrong leadership ended up doing wrong things [versus] those who were exposed to the right kind of leadership, which grounded youth in principles that respect human life, the environment . . . [violence] is more likely to be resisted. And we believe by the time someone finishes here, they would have that kind of attitude. (UR Administrator B, S. P.)

Thus, many interviewees offered evidence that both the UR and the M.A. program itself are not only concerned with how graduating students will fit into the economy as job seekers, but also with how they function in the world as potential peacemakers.

Catalyst for personal transformation as peace leaders. In addition to instilling the Graduate Attributes, another common theme in participant responses to how they see the M.A. program mission preparing students for peace work was that it catalyzes their transformation on a deeply personal level as leaders who value and uphold peace, and sometimes guides them towards interpreting it with new lenses. One alumna's view of peace itself was expanded so significantly that it inspired her to change her career path. When she began the program, she was working at the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) doing peacebuilding and conflict management, where, as she put it, "I had a perception of, you know, 'negative peace', because when I joined the work I did, we had perpetrators versus victims, but from my two years in the program, I developed the interest in peace education" (Alumna B, S. P.).

This interest took her shortly after graduation to the Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP), where she played a pivotal role for nearly five years in the development of the Rwanda Peace Education Program (RPEP), which mainstreamed peace education in primary and secondary schools nationwide. She explained that the change in her thinking that led to this professional shift was that

> peace is more than trying to help people to calm down a tension—peace can be like a life skill, and it's an approach of viewing things, doing things, so it's something that everyone needs to integrate in the way they live. And it's something for me that will be effective [and] needs to be taught from early childhood, the values that need to be transmitted; . . . in fact, literacy functions indirectly as peace education! Because it's an approach to build or shape that person we need to see in the future by exposing that person to stories. (Alumna B, S. P.)

Actually, this M.A. graduate was so impacted by this viewpoint that she made an additional career move into working with an organization whose primary goal is to support peace education through early childhood literacy.

Another alumna still working at NURC recalled how the M.A. program similarly expanded her views of not only what peace entails, but what is possible for a peaceful society. She explained that

> you see a kind of relative peace—you think you are already there, and this was the kind of thinking in most Rwandans. But from the program, I realized that peace is more than what we have today, and I realize that we have a lot to do. (Alumna C, S. P.)

From that impetus, she claims that she was empowered to not only serve in her role at NURC more effectively, but also to expand her authority and influence in that role in other arenas she had not considered. For example, she proudly asserted that "sometimes now, here, people consult me and consider me as academic—I'm an academician in the field of peace studies! . . . That's how I came to capacity building here" (Alumna C, S. P.). Thus, she is able to see herself as a leader more readily than she was able to do before the program and is finding that her colleagues are treating her with the respect and deference warranted by such expertise.

These experiences of self-actualization on the part of students are no accident; indeed, numerous faculty members told me that they fully intend to approach their time with their cohorts with such a goal in mind. One veteran CCM faculty member asserted that "there are lecturers who are going beyond teaching about peace. They also want people to be transformed, including myself, like by sharing those personal testimonies" (CCM Faculty G, S. P.).

Another professor also emphasized the idea that the M.A. program's mission was "mainly to do with helping all these people who would be interested to link their daily lives to this knowledge of peace studies. . . . To help people understand that there is another way of dealing with conflicts that arise in their daily lives" (CCM Faculty B, S. P.).

Yet another CCM faculty member, who teaches students in both the M.A. program and from theology and military programs, also corroborated seeing such changes take place in students, recalling that "at the beginning, it's very tough, because they have their stereotypes; they have their ideologically-oriented messages. But [later], they are more comfortable, more sure. Yeah, so it's a kind of internal liberation" (CCM Faculty F, S. P.).

A fourth CCM professor, now doing his post-doctorate in Sweden, attested that not only did such a give-and-take with students enable them to change, but that it also catalyzed his own transformation in ways that have made him a stronger teacher and, to his mind, a better person. Specifically, he told me that the M.A. program

> has changed my ways of thinking, handling differences and conflicts with people by teaching. I feel more responsible, more accountable. . . . Yeah, it goes beyond simple knowledge of the topic—it has impacted my attitude, . . . the way I react to differences, diversity, [even] conflicting views between me and my wife, between me and my friends, etc. (CCM Faculty D, S. P.)

Such a sea change in one's approach to life was not uncommon in participant responses when they reflected on the M.A. program's impact, whether as students, as faculty members, or as administrators.

This openhearted attitude of willingness to be fundamentally changed by one's experience at the UR was echoed by even the highest-level administrator I interviewed, a Western educator, who asserted that his time with the UR has influenced him deeply as both a leader and as a human being. Specifically, he explained that over time, he realized that Rwanda

can be hierarchical enough that simply getting feedback from one's deputies is not sufficient because they are likely to share only what they think will be well-received.

Thus, he concluded that it was important to get out and speak to people on the ground—especially students. This realization led him to make a habit of walking the UR campuses in order to wish students luck on exams in the libraries, ask how they are feeling in elevators, and other such approachable gestures. He lamented the fact that in so many universities worldwide, those in positions of power behave as though they are burdened by students and staff sharing their concerns, passionately asserting to me that

> I think the role of [a high-level leader] is not only a strategist and line manager, but is also like a chaplain, in a sense, . . . a lightning conductor for the organization. . . . And I think we need to constantly have discussion about what a [high-level leader] should be. . . . How else do you create community, when you've got 14 campuses and 13,000 students? (UR Administrator A, S. P.)

He was far from the only interviewee who articulated in no uncertain terms that "that's one of the missions of the University, to create the next generation of leaders of this country" (UR Administrator A, S. P.), and that the institution's success is intimately tied to this outcome.

Research Question/Discourse Theme 2 and Interview Questions 13-20:

IMPLEMENTATION

Having unpacked the emergent themes related to the first research question and discourse theme, along with the first five substantive interview questions, we now move on to discussion of how study participants' responses shed light on the second research question and discourse theme, and the next eight interview questions. This section will explain in detail how interviewees conceived of the M.A. program's implementation in three key areas: first, logistics of the program's design, including support from partnerships, second, decisions about student

diversity, equity and gender parity, and third, mechanisms for addressing differences of opinion and conflict resolution within the program.

IQ13-15: Logistics of program design and support from partnerships. These three interview questions asked the following: Who was involved in its conception and design? AND What circumstances led to the development of the program? AND What has been the role of partnerships between the M.A. program and other UR programs/centres, or between the M.A. program and other institutions or organizations? Do you see these partnerships as adding value to the program? In this section, I offer a description of those individuals (by role rather than name) and groups who were involved in the creation of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program, followed by an explanation of the logistics that have gone into designing the program over the past decade. I first elaborate on the expansion of the CCM mandate, followed by explaining the strategic importance of CCM's most significant partnership with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), for which there is a dedicated office called UR-Sweden. Finally, I elaborate on CCM's intentional tactic of embracing borrowed best practices but remaining intentionally grounded in local realities.

Expansion of mandate from production to dissemination of knowledge. Although the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program did not begin until Fall 2011 (two academic years after its sister program, the M.A. in Genocide Studies and Prevention), the academic hub that houses the programs, the Centre for Conflict Management, was actually created 12 years earlier. In 1999, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) created a "trust fund" for Rwanda, part of which included support for the Centre's launch. Initially, CCM was conceived of primarily as a research incubator, where new insights about the postgenocide

context in Rwanda would be generated. According to the UR-Sweden program page on the UR website, the creation of CCM offered "an opportunity to generate native knowledge on the deep causes of conflicts and potential strategies for the development of sustainable peace in Rwanda and beyond" (UR, 2018c).

However, several years into the Centre's work (lacking documentation makes the exact timeframe difficult to pin down), CCM leadership and University administration at large reached the conclusion that such a venture would be unsustainable without training new scholars to whom the baton will be eventually be passed to continue the work. This concern was especially and poignantly pressing for Rwanda, which had lost the vast majority of its highly educated professionals during the Genocide, either through death or expatriation elsewhere.

According to one high-level UR administrator who recalls the collective attitude at that time, there was an urgency to exponentially expand CCM's impact, which stakeholders came to believe could only be done through fostering both innovative scholarship and newly minted scholars. He recounted that the institutional self-examination process entailed that

> we look more at the overall direction of research and education and how what is offered makes a difference to the individuals, the education given, but also to the country. Because we do produce graduates, we do produce research, and that has to make an impact. (UR Administrator B, S. P.)

Indeed, according to one of UR's high-ranking administrators, the launch of M.A. programs had the intent from the outset of supporting the overall goals and impact of CCM rather than existing in a vacuum; each facet of CCM was meant to reinforce the others (UR Administrator F, S. P.).

Similarly, one faculty member remembers the process as having the ultimate sustainability of CCM in mind, not just the creation of new degree programs. He explained to me that "when we started it, the thing was, we were putting much in[to] research at CCM. But we

weren't really contributing outside the community, kind of training other people to have the same skills as what we thought we had" (CCM Faculty B, S. P.).

CCM's first attempt to branch out beyond research into teaching culminated with the launch of the M.A. in Genocide Studies and Prevention program in Fall 2009, in order to address directly and concretely the unique tragedy that had befallen Rwanda 15 years prior. However, even in the planning stages of the Genocide Studies program, there was the intent to eventually expand into peace studies as well. According to numerous interviewees, in many ways, CCM took the attitude of "first things first", in that their academic programming initially sought to motivate Rwandan students to both learn and write more about the Genocide and the immediate pressing issues following in its wake.

However, most study participants also pointed out, in one way or another, that the evolution of the M.A. programs from Genocide Studies to Peace Studies (and later Security Studies) was a mirror of the nation's progress in general—that as years passed, the issues most pressing to deal with changed and became broader. For example, one alumna reflected upon the two M.A. programs and told me that "this Peace Studies [program] is also equally important. It complements completely with the Genocide Studies [program]. If we don't build peace, . . . then there is that risk of going back into the conflict erupting and all that" (Alumna A, S. P.).

One professor (among many) summarized this trend by saying that "we have been the last [few] years, doing Genocide Studies. But, you know, now you have to push and push" (CCM Faculty F, S. P.). In the same vein, an administrator offered the justification for expanding into peace studies with the argument that "we believe that the transformation is really the next step.

. . . You will be sure that there is less conflict when there is development. Peace can be sustained, if there is development. So, that why the program was attractive" (UR Administrator F, S. P.).

These insights about the need to expand the M.A. programming resulted in the creation of an advisory board, made up of members from the UR community, alongside participants from peacebuilding in Rwandan civil society and Government agencies. As one faculty member (formerly the CCM Program Director) attests, "the process to develop this master's was consultative in nature . . . the objective was to avail a critical mass of intellectuals who have analytical capacity and skills, and clear understanding of the history of this country" (CCM Faculty D, S. P.).

Thus, the board included professionals from organizations like the National Commission for the Fight Against Genocide (CNLG), the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC), the Rwanda Education Board (REB), Never Again Rwanda (NAR), the Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP), among others. Some of these contributors were consulted individually for their expertise, while others participated in various planning seminars and retreats prior to the program's launch.

However, one of the key players in the development of both M.A. programs was SIDA, specifically their partner institution, the School of Global Studies at the University of Göthenburg. According to the CCM Program Director, "the program was developed by the teams from those two institutions . . . actually, even now, we are running it jointly" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.). This key foreign partner will be discussed at length in the section to follow.

Significance of partnership with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The story of SIDA support that follows is an amalgamation of comments made by my study participants, compared alongside SIDA and UR-Sweden documentation. The UR-Sweden Overall Programme Coordinator (OPC) merits special mention, as he was instrumental in helping me understand this complex program and offered a wealth of insight. Despite how fruitful SIDA support has been for CCM and the M.A. program, the funder's focus on "Peace, Conflict, and Development", as they refer to that subprogram, is but a small portion of their overall investment in the UR. In fact, funding towards that subprogram represents only 9% of total UR-Sweden funding as of December 2017 (SIDA, 2018). However, SIDA's impact has been no less profound for the M.A. program for having other foci at the UR, as I will discuss in more detail later in this section.

According to the 2018 SIDA evaluation of its UR partnership overall, "right from the beginning, the objective of the cooperation was to strengthen research capacity with emphasis on human resource development, strengthening research management, and improving the research environment" (SIDA, 2018). Both UR-Sweden and SIDA itself envision the program as contributing directly to Rwanda's development, including poverty eradication, and today the UR-Sweden program is "the largest and most comprehensive externally funded institutional program at the University of Rwanda" (UR, 2015).

That being said, this impressive outcome came from humble beginnings; as I briefly alluded to earlier, following the Genocide, initial support for the UR came from UNDP in the form of funding expatriate lecturers who could fill the gap left by scholars who had been victims of the killings. The UR actually remained closed for a full year once the Genocide began and did

not reopen until April 1995. At that time, the need was especially acute in areas related to addressing postconflict settings immediately following the end of violence, such as medicine and other sciences.

However, within about seven years, UNDP funds ran short, SIDA stepped in to fill the gap in 2002 with greater commitment, having already been offering ad hoc technical assistance to the UR since 2000. According to the UR-Sweden OPC, SIDA initially paid the salaries of expatriate lecturers, as UNDP had done and with the lens of such help being a kind of emergency support, "but eventually after one year—or even after six months!—it was realized that this cannot be the most sustainable way. You need to develop the capacity of Rwandans who can actually have that research capacity, and also run the institution themselves" (UR Administrator F, S. P.).

From this realization, SIDA launched a planning grant for a full research capacity building program in 2002. Thus, began the first of three phases thus far of the UR-Sweden program, with the first phase being between 2003 and 2006, the second phase being between 2007 and 2012, and the third phase being between 2013 and 2017. At the time of this writing, the UR-Sweden program is embarking on a fourth phase, between 2018 and 2021 whose outcomes, of course, remain to be seen. However, the OPC reported that the UR and SIDA remained on very good negotiating terms and that, by the time of my interview with him in June 2017, the UR's Deputy Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement had spent significant time in Sweden discussing details of the ongoing arrangement.

During the first phase, there was already support for academic degree seekers, but for CCM specifically, the support only went towards funding peace studies Ph.D. seekers in Swedish partner universities. The UR-Sweden OPC recalled that

> mainly in that phase, the objective was to get the people. . . . You have a country that is coming from the Genocide—it's almost on its knees—and it needs to develop quickly with very ambitious leadership, so that means that at least we need to develop that capacity for people. . . . So, that's how this program came as one of the first programs to understand the conflict part of it. Management of the conflict, but also the peace! And development, which is an equally important perspective. (UR Administrator F, S. P.)

He explained that this first phase focused mainly on individuals but was not yet considering the big picture regarding the need for greater numbers of trained scholars who could unpack the research that was being done in peace studies.

The second phase brought much greater consideration of the potential for local degree programs that could facilitate ongoing dialogue; this idea was fueled by a widespread desire on the part of returning Ph.D. holders and other Rwandan staff to make research more interactive and interesting, rather than an afterthought on the part of Rwandan scholars. Actually, this issue was addressed not only by the creation of the M.A. programs, but also by the eventual inclusion of post-doctorate funding, to enable Rwandan Ph.D. holders to continue building momentum and expertise in research skills.

In the bigger picture, the UR-Sweden OPC reported that between 2003 and 2013, the program enrolled almost 60 Ph.D. students in various disciplines across the University, in subjects like environment and land issues (which he insightfully noted is connected to peace), primary and secondary education, communications and ICT, medicine and health, mathematics, and library studies. Interestingly, the UR-Sweden program during this second phase marked the creation of an ICT center to serve the whole University and thus, the first time the UR was able to reliably access the internet across its campuses.

During the third phase, the subject areas of Ph.D. seekers expanded to include innovative topics like e-governance, agriculture, economics and management (particularly small and family-owned businesses and microfinance), disaster management, criminal and human rights law, and geographic information systems (GIS).

The UR-Sweden program is the primary funder for Ph.D.s in all of these subjects, alongside those in peace studies, making them a particularly stable and deeply integrated funder to rely upon, given their longstanding and nuanced involvement with the University. And, of course, the program also funds operational expenses for the CCM M.A. and post-doc programs. According to the OPC, the budget for such programming at the UR as a whole has increased exponentially, with the budget in phase one reaching only U.S. $10-14 million and eventually reaching over U.S. $50 million during the third phase (UR Administrator F, S. P.).

According to SIDA themselves, the overarching goal of the ever-expanding program is "to build long lasting relationships between Sweden and Rwanda, [as] we see the program, which is the largest in the higher education sector, as a pillar in Rwanda's efforts to make the transition to a knowledge-based economy" (SIDA, 2018).

Participant responses offered evidence that the UR is becoming increasingly self-sufficient the longer the partnership continues. As the PCO explained, in the early years, SIDA colleagues assisted in the development of course modules and sent in foreign lecturers, but as of 2017, CCM retained 10 Ph.D. graduates who have benefitted from UR-Sweden funding and have since returned to teach in the M.A. programs, thus reducing the need for expatriate staff.

This increase in locally-based management is further reflected in the high autonomy granted to the PCO himself, who told me he is entrusted to not only manage the Rwanda side of

the UR-Sweden program, but also to offer perspective on the Sweden side of the program, which still continually hosts Ph.D. and post-doc students from Rwanda. Such ownership of the program's direction and priorities will be discussed more at length in the next section.

Borrowed best practices, but locally grounded content and leadership. According to the UR-Sweden program page on the UR website, the creation of CCM offered "an opportunity to generate native knowledge on the deep causes of conflicts and potential strategies for the development of sustainable peace in Rwanda and beyond" (UR, 2018c). The M.A. Program Coordinator summarized the early stages of planning the program as having Rwandan history as a foundation from which to grow, yet because of the desire to create a strong program from its inception, deferring to SIDA expertise in the logistics of what that might look like because "they had experience, they are trained in that program, so we felt it's really important input trying to build what they are doing in our context" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.).

Another CCM faculty member and current post-doc researcher elaborated that keeping Rwanda's experience at the fore when developing program content meant focusing attention on "the history of discrimination, the history of lies and manipulation, the history of exclusion of one group of Rwandans, . . . not just based on theories, but also corresponding and responding to the specific context of Rwanda. It is context bound" (CCM Faculty D, S. P.).

He said that keeping the experience of their country always in view meant that as the program grew, Rwandan leadership sometimes saw ways in which the modules were not yet fully adapted to the national context, and offered the example of the need to develop a module on Media and Conflict in Peacebuilding, since such mass communication outlets played a critical role both leading up to the Genocide and in sensitizing Rwandans to reconciliation afterwards.

Yet another CCM faculty member and recent Ph.D. graduate described this balance sought between embracing foreign expertise and privileging local context by telling me about another partnership CCM had during development of the M.A. program that was fruitful, but not as long-standing, namely with the UN-mandated University for Peace (UPEACE)[6] in Costa Rica (CCM Faculty B, S. P.). He explained CCM's participation in a large-scale collaboration called the Great Lakes Project, spearheaded by UPEACE and inclusive of institutions from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia and, of course, Rwanda. These participants attended various seminars in different international locations, where they worked in cross-national teams.

This faculty member recalled working in depth with a Cameroonian colleague from UPEACE on curriculum development for the M.A. program who brought in particular expertise related to peacebuilding and demography, and later co-teaching a course in the program together. However, after a year, the faculty member had gained enough capacity to teach the course on his own, although once he went to Sweden to pursue his Ph.D., this same UPEACE colleague came to Rwanda to teach the course in his stead until he was ready to return and resume his role. In this way, the partnership empowered Rwandan CCM leadership to develop their own self-sufficient ability to grow.

Furthermore, this faculty member explicitly drew the comparison between the M.A. program in Rwanda, based in its highly particular conflict history, and the UPEACE master's programs, arguing that

[6] This is also a unique institution, which I myself visited about 15 years ago, and which draws M.A. and Ph.D. students from around the world.

> when you consider the University for Peace, it is huge, it is inspired probably by the UN Security Council; they have this need to train what they call peacemakers who will go and influence the whole world. They have a huge, huge context they are inspired by. (CCM Faculty B, S. P.)

Similarly, regarding SIDA, he stressed that "the Swedish were the leaders, the ones providing a lot of knowledge in terms of curriculum development, but still we were also focusing on the locals" (CCM Faculty B, S. P.), in particular those few at the time with expertise directly relevant to the Rwandan context.

This locally-derived knowledge in Peace Studies included his own as a Rwandan UPEACE graduate, the knowledge of the CCM Acting Director in the social context of change, and that of a history professor study participant, who has been with the UR for decades. Thus, there was participant consensus that SIDA brought longer-term technical competence in curriculum development, but the Rwandan contributors brought content knowledge that only local scholars could have offered to the process.

For example, an oft lamented issue with Western scholarship can indeed be the lack of connection between theory and lived experiences, but this problem is countered by scholarship that prioritizes local context as heavily as Rwanda does with the M.A. program. One veteran professor commented that

> most of the time, people from the North are talking about theories, . . . but theories are related to social reality, and these social realities are very complex. . . . All these things being located somewhere is key. So, I always discuss with young Ph.D. holders about this, [saying], "yes, I agree—I appreciate your new knowledge, but how can you convince me that these theories are really applicable?" (CCM Faculty F, S. P.)

Indeed, interviewees confirmed that the eventual phasing out of mostly foreign professors was inevitable given the M.A. program's goals to focus primarily on Rwandan content, as evidenced by another CCM professor's recollection that in the early years, "I remember one [foreign] expert saying 'you know, we have no expertise to talk about the Genocide'" (CCM Faculty F,

S. P.), which meant that the most significant mass violence to be wrestled with in the Rwandan M.A. courses was being neglected at first.

Clearly, participants recounted, in order to ground the program in the Rwandan context, local expertise had to be quickly developed in order for faculty members to cover the Genocide directly. However, this priority did not mean that there was ever a desire on the part of CCM leadership to intentionally exclude foreign perspectives. The CCM Coordinator at the time of my study clarified that "it's really important that we consider our context here, of course, but I mean, we don't need to reject experiences from other parts of the world" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.). The Acting Director agreed, taking the argument a step further by asserting that

> I think we in academia, we need to widen up, to share knowledge from abroad, because even if we have enough Rwandan staff, I think in my understanding, it's preferable to have someone from outside. He has always an added value—always! . . . Because we need also to have an external viewpoint. Because we are embedded in the context of genocide [which] means we can develop a language, an academic language with so much local [context], understandable [perhaps only] by people who are here, which is a very big trap for the academy. (CCM Faculty C, S. P.)

This insightful realization of the value of cross-pollinating perspectives in order to avoid jargon was shared by other study participants as well. Another faculty member explained to me that, in part due to the influence of having added students from the military, police and other countries in the region, "they renewed the programs recently to adapt it to the global context. . . . They enlarged the mission to attract more kinds of knowledge that go beyond specific ideas we had at the beginning. . . . They have broadened it, which is actually what should be done" (CCM Faculty B, S. P.), in order to situate Rwanda in the global peacebuilding context at large.

One of my alumna participants corroborated the success of this shift, saying that "I was able to connect my work and knowing what is reconciliation with other contexts, from the academic perspective, from the experience of other countries" (Alumna C, S. P.). Even the

highest-ranking administrator with whom I spoke echoed this idea that as critical as self-sufficiency and local content are, the UR and CCM need to maintain relevancy by embracing openness to a globalized outlook. He shared that even with a growing number of talented young Rwandan scholars reaching readiness to replace their expat compatriots in the University, his dream was to move from foreigners simply filling gaps

> to truly having an international faculty, where people like yourself choose to work here because it's an exciting place! It's where you can get stuff moving, it's where you can get lots of publications as a team, it's where you can raise the profile of not only yourself and further your own academic career, but also your colleagues here. (UR Administrator A, S. P.)

This lofty vision for making the UR a place that attracts not only highly qualified Rwandan scholars, but also global scholars was shared with me by numerous participants and maintaining the delicate balanced discussed above between incorporating global perspectives and prioritizing Rwandan experience remains always an integral part of realizing that vision.

IQ16-18: Decisions about student diversity, equity, and gender parity. These three interview questions asked: What are the backgrounds of the students accepted into the M.A. program? AND Do you feel the students who have been part of the M.A. program thus far represent an accurate cross-section of the Rwandan population at large? Why or why not? AND Similarly, do you feel the M.A. program is taking measures to achieve gender parity among its students and faculty members?

I will primarily use this section to present the broader picture of the program's goal of creating cohorts of seasoned professionals, along with the rationale for program decisions to create a modular class structure and particular course scheduling, and how these choices shifted as the program matured. However, where appropriate, I will share relevant context about the demographics particular to the four alumnae I interviewed as additional support for my points.

Relatedly, I will explain the evolution of recruitment processes for the program, followed by a consideration of the consequences of program decisions for student outcomes, in particular loss of continuity and student supports, challenges arising from differential tuition fees between M.A. programs, and disproportionate impact by gender, resulting in a difference between CCM's vision for gender parity and its realities.

Creating intimately sized cohorts of seasoned professionals. I heard conflicting accounts of how many students were in each cohort; one student said the total was around 20, while another from the same cohort reported 25, and yet another recalled that there had been about 40 students. It may well be that the first cohort started with 20 to 25 people and the second cohort grew to include closer to 40. Nevertheless, the cohorts were intentionally crafted to be on the smaller side, and one alumna stressed that "it was enough for each cohort" (Alumna B, S. P.).

Based on my nearly three dozen interviews, there is strong evidence that there are overarching trends in how CCM created its student body. However, this qualitative support for my conclusions came largely from faculty members, administrators and civil society peacebuilders, since (as discussed more at length in Chapter 5), I was only able to include four (former) students in my interview sample. Specifically, I interviewed four female alumnae from the first two cohorts of the M.A. program (two began with the first cohort, and two with the second cohort).

Although the program apparently has had slightly more females than males in its cohorts since its inception, obviously this all-female sample was not representative of the M.A. program's student demographics as a whole. Nonetheless, their experiences lend additional critical insights to those shared by other stakeholders in the program.

Professional roles held by alumnae interviewees. Before discussing the decision making around student recruitment in general, I want to first offer more detail about the professional roles of the four alumnae I interviewed, since these details inform their perspectives on the issues that follow in our discussion. One alumna was very unique among those I talked to and, supposedly, among M.A. participants in general in that she comes from a counseling background. She reported having served in psychosocial support roles for 23 years at the time of our interview in June 2017. Her primary role was with the Rwanda Organization of Trauma Counselors (ARCT-RUHUKA), which trains trauma counselors, offers clinical supervision and, of course, serves clients in need of therapy. However, since the program, she expanded her work to include external consulting as a professional witness for the International Criminal Court (ICC), thus bringing her trauma counseling expertise into a broader context of conflict management at the community level.

In a different arena of conflict management, a second alumna has worked at the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) for 11 years, coordinating peace activities around the country, and particularly capacity building and partnership initiatives, for which she fosters new relationships, identifies gaps, and organizes trainings, orientations, and evaluations. Her previous role at NURC was as Director of the Peacebuilding and Conflict Management Department, with particular supervisory responsibilities over regional and national dialogue programs. Interestingly, she came to NURC having already completed graduate coursework in education, specifically biology and chemistry, but also having supervised informal student organizations related to peacebuilding.

Similarly, a third Alumna also had 11 years of experience with NURC, but with particular expertise related to unity and reconciliation through their Research Department. Since her completion of the M.A. program, she was promoted from being a research officer in conflict management to a specialist in charge of research, monitoring, and evaluation at the broader level of peacebuilding.

The fourth alumna with whom I spent time also happened to have worked at NURC in the Department of Peacebuilding and Conflict Management; however, largely due to the program's influence on her aspirations, shortly after graduating she moved on to coordinating the Rwanda Peace Education Program at the Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP) for nearly five years. At IRDP, she developed such strong appreciation for peace education that she ultimately moved on to a Program Manager position at a nonprofit called *Umuhuza* (which means *mediator* in Kinyarwanda), where she focuses attention on peace education in early childhood development and literacy projects. The high degree of variety yet overlaps in these four M.A. alumnae's professional experience ultimately reflected a broader theme among my interview participants in general.

Choosing working professionals as master's candidates. As demonstrated by the four alumnae above, the students selected for participation in the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program have purposely been individuals with significant experience in the field. More specifically, the Acting Director clarified that "the target was people in the areas where they meet conflict and they have to address some conflict" (CCM Faculty C, S. P.), and that ideally, they would continue working in such areas concurrently with their matriculation in the program, while another CCM faculty member/administrator confirmed that "they are all

professionals working, some with high profile positions in different areas. So, those are the kind of people at the moment we are teaching" (UR Administrator E, S. P.).

Numerous study participants who had the opportunity to teach in the program expressed the unique dynamic created by having these kinds of students in the classroom. For example, one young Western faculty member with whom I spoke candidly confessed to having felt intimidated at first because, as she recalled, 90% of the students were older than her, married with children, and with much longer work experience.

Nonetheless, she remembered the experience with great fondness because she said "their already-extensive knowledge in the domain made it very interesting . . . because they want to participate. So, when they reach there at like 6:00 [p.m.], they don't just want to sleep—I mean, they wanted to talk! It was just amazing" (UR Faculty A, S. P.), particularly in debates. Senior faculty members agreed with this synopsis, saying that teaching in general, and even about thorny topics in the program was "a little easier because they have dealt with these systems in real life" (UR Administrator B, S. P.).

Alumnae corroborated these conclusions, with one confirming that among their cohorts, "they were the key people that were doing the work" (Alumna D, S. P.), and another explaining that having only come into the program with four years of post-undergraduate experience, she was actually among the youngest students, that "we didn't have fresh, young college graduates" (Alumna B, S. P.). Thus, the M.A. program has consistently met its target of drawing in students with rich expertise in relevant fields prior to their admission.

Modular classes to facilitate hiring both foreign and local faculty members. Because CCM designed the program to accommodate working students, its leaders also concluded that

such students would value having professors with similarly nuanced expertise. When the program began, the University of Rwanda did not yet have a sufficient cadre of local scholars to teach at the master's level in peace studies, and so it was deemed necessary to supplement the program with professors from outside Rwanda.

Although there were a number of instructors (particularly for the first cohort) from the United States and Australia who came to teach modules, the primary sender of visiting lecturers to the M.A. program was Sweden, particularly the University of Göthenburg's School of Global Studies (SGS). The assistance from SGS was so strong that multiple alumnae referred to it as a bilateral partnership, and one recalled that 70% or more of her lecturers in the first cohort were from the University of Göthenburg (Alumna B, S. P.).

In order to accommodate the varied schedules of these foreign academics, the courses were designed in a modular style, meaning that they were meant to be of varying lengths, usually shorter than the typical sixteen-week, semester-long class. Most alumnae agreed that in the first two cohorts, the typical module lasted between one and two weeks, with the consequence being that, as one alumna from the first cohort recalled, "we had a very squeezed program; we didn't delay—we didn't lose time. . . . And almost all the [students], they were very committed to come to study, which was really very helpful for us" (Alumna D, S. P.). Although there was a definite intensity inherent in the modular structure, with some modules meeting every single day with no breaks for classes, students asserted that having only one module at a time before beginning another was helpful for maintaining focus.

Alumnae also recalled that many modules were co-taught by two professors, sometimes two foreign lecturers, but often one foreign faculty member and one Rwandan faculty member.

Alternately, some modules that are more involved or complex (such as Theories of Development) were deemed as needing to be longer in order to accommodate more content, and so the program had one professor come from abroad to teach a portion of the course, then another professor would come and take over, with each faculty member evaluating students on their piece of the module.

This modular structure was affected significantly by a change that occurred between the first and second cohorts—a change that every alumna noted, and that two had the opportunity to observe directly because of completing later than planned. Specifically, CCM was eager to shift the balance towards a greater proportion of Rwandan professors and did so by the beginning of the second cohort's matriculation.

Scheduling of course offerings. Because the students were almost unanimously juggling full-time jobs alongside their graduate studies, CCM intentionally designed it as part-time, with classes to held in the evenings and on weekends. According to one CCM administrator, these scheduling choices are the same for the M.A. in Genocide Studies and Prevention; however, for the M.A. in Security Studies and the parallel M.A. in Peace Studies program geared only towards military and police personnel, these two master's programs are offered as part of full-time ongoing training being undergone already by these individuals, and so the master's courses are taught within their campuses at any of time of day (UR Administrator E, S. P.). One CCM faculty member explained that for the most part, students in each M.A. program take classes mainly with each other, without much mixing of programs, although some modules are co-offered through the School of Law for LLM students (CCM Faculty A, S. P.).

One notable difference between the M.A. program in Rwanda and similar such programs in the United States. is that whereas in the latter, part-time status may mean you have class one or two evenings each week after work, for the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution, at least in the first few cohorts, students recalled a breakneck schedule of having class every evening Tuesday through Friday for three or four hours per day and also on Saturday mornings, with heavy assignments to be completed in between sessions.

As one can imagine, such a schedule proved overwhelming for all alumnae I spoke to, who struggled to varying degrees. One in particular emphasized that during the program, "you couldn't do anything. . . . Most of the time, even when we didn't have class, if it happens that you go to consult the library, you could find that the majority of students were there. . . . It was very complicated!" (Alumna B, S. P.). All alumnae also recalled the challenge of commuting from work to and from the UR campus in Gikondo; although Kigali is not such a large city, traffic can become quite slow, especially in the evenings, and so the combination of work and studies and family obligations was extremely challenging for the students with whom I talked.

My understanding is that the M.A. program has since revised the scheduling such that it is a bit less onerous, though I had difficulty finding out exactly what changes were made. The only example I heard that was being officially considered was the possibility of switching to a schedule in which M.A. students come for a full eight hours on Saturday, rather than multiple weeknights. However, numerous study participants expressed strong distaste when I relayed this idea to them because they argued that no student can reasonably concentrate on such intense content for a full day and absorb the ideas when there are no breaks in which to get refreshed.

Initially limited recruitment with eventual broadening of target student demographics. When the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program began, its intention was to start out modestly by only drawing applicants from a very few organizations. In part, this choice was made because the beginning stages of program design happened at the same time as the M.A. in Genocide Studies and Prevention, which was put forward first and was even more targeted in its initial recruitment.

One alumna told me that at first, CCM planned to partner directly with two highly related Government agencies—the National Commission for the Fight Against Genocide (CNLG) for the M.A. in Genocide Studies and Prevention, and NURC for the M.A in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation. She explained that "the idea really was to help the existing institutions, to equip them with skilled staff. This was the first target" (Alumna C, S. P.), and such goals were the driving forces behind the initial M.O.U.s with these institutions. In fact, she recalled that at first, the plan was to house the Peace Studies M.A. in NURC's headquarters, but ultimately more space was needed than the organization could provide.

For the first iteration of the two-year peace studies program, NURC sent seven of its core staff to matriculate, though both alumnae from that organization mentioned that not everyone who began completed the degree or stayed on at NURC after finishing. Other students came from around the country, but the institutions from which they were recruited were very limited in the first and second cohorts. These organizations included the Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission (RDRC), the *Umuvunyi* [Ombudsman]—which one alumnae said sent six students the first year—and according to a faculty member who was CCM Deputy Director

during the program's founding, "other staff of the Government who were directly involved in social transformation, but who really didn't have this knowledge" (CCM Faculty B, S. P.).

It was not closed to other students per se, but as partnering organizations, these institutions paid the tuition fees for the early master's candidates to attend. One CCM faculty member and UR Administrator Added the caveat that although rarer, there were indeed some students who paid for themselves in the early years of the program because to be considered, "it's an open call, people apply, and we assess the criteria for whether they fulfill the academic requirements, but we don't get involved in the issues of [whether] they are offered scholarships" (UR Administrator E, S. P.). This issue will be discussed more at length in the next section.

One alumna noted the upside of such targeted recruitment, in that "necessarily, you know that you had people who knew you who worked alongside you . . . you had friends" (Alumna B, S. P.), which added to the feeling of camaraderie within a cohort. Another alumna told me that although the institutions students came from were few in the beginning, nonetheless the early matriculants were from various interesting personal backgrounds and were of different ages and stages of life, despite being working adults.

Since the UR was the only public university in the country at this point, its choices around program development were heavily influenced by the priorities of the Rwandan Government. As already discussed, the impetus for launching the programs came from an expanded mandate within CCM of the work they were already engaged in, and when the Centre embarked upon the Peace Studies M.A. program, "the Government supported the beginning of it, because they saw really that it was relevant—they immediately accepted it. And we had many people coming from these institutions coming in and liking it" (CCM Faculty B, S. P.).

He described the later Security Studies M.A. and the police-specific Peace Studies M.A. as being natural outgrowths for CCM because "we were getting individual people from those [areas], but later on they saw that it was relevant for all of them, so they started requesting us to develop specific programs for their academy" (CCM Faculty B, S. P.).

Another former UR administrator now leading a civil society organization agreed that "the historical background of those two programs is mattering very much—and who initiated them", but also recalled concern that "how can we maintain this program really, when it is based from [just] one or two institutions?" (UR Administrator H, S. P.). Indeed, the high demand for the program and rising interest from potential students in other institutions or arenas of peacebuilding led to the expansion of recruitment focus beyond the initial Government agencies.

One faculty member and UR administrator stressed that the M.A. programs now "issue a call for application. So, the call is open for whoever is interested—it's all backgrounds" (UR Administrator E, S. P.). With the expansion of the mandate and of student recruitment, later M.A. cohorts included a wide array of leaders from virtually all sectors of Rwandan society. For example, the M.A. Program Coordinator cited lawyers, NGO staff, and even medical and public health personnel as being part of the student body (CCM Faculty E, S. P.).

Another faculty member concurred that not only were there leaders from all arenas and that "it was exciting to meet those people, . . . so it's a master's degree at a high level" (CCM Faculty A, S. P.), but that there were some "big personalities", such as the CNLG Executive Secretary, decision makers with the Rwanda Correctional Service (RCS) dealing with convicted *genocidaires* [perpetrators found guilty during the Genocide], and even the Prosecutor General of the National Public Prosecution Authority (NPPA).

Other fields cited as offering many students to the M.A. program included journalism (Alumna A, S. P.), Parliamentarians and leaders from every major Rwandan ministry (UR Faculty A, S. P.), those fighting corruption and working with citizen complaints (Alumna B, S. P.), history, sociology and (less frequently so far) psychology (CCM Faculty C, S. P.), educators at various levels (CCM Faculty F, S. P.). The broadening of the student body demographics has been achieved by casting a wider net, not only in terms of professional roles, but also in terms of national origin.

The M.A. Program Coordinator enthusiastically reported that "I have to tell you that now students are calling, even though we are not [even actively] recruiting until next month. . . . But since January, actually, I have been receiving many inquiries from students outside Rwanda" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.). He proudly underscored that seven months before the official call for applications was posted and disseminated through various channels, the program has gained enough of a solid reputation to garner such interest, even from outside the country.

How alumnae heard about the M.A. program and what motivated their enrollment. Although three of the four students I interviewed became aware of the M.A. program through their employers at the time, all four had different stated reasons for what drew them to actually apply and enroll. One Alumna Acknowledged that NURC, particularly the Peace and Conflict Resolution Department, encouraged its staff to participate, even offering financial sponsorship, but also recalled that "I had developed interest for the particular field of Conflict Management, as a course I had in my undergraduate studies. And then I worked in that field, so I wanted to put some fuel into my practice" (Alumna B, S. P.), and indeed she ended up transitioning into a new stage of her career because of her participation.

Another NURC alumna who heard about the program from her colleagues similarly expressed the sentiment that "the program it [came] when it was very, very necessary. For example, for me, I was dealing with research in Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation when I got that knowledge we required, and so I knew that program would be really very important to us" (Alumna D, S. P.).

A third alumna was vaguer about how she initially became aware of the M.A. program, but mentioned having been at the UR for her undergraduate degree, so she remained in the loop about new initiatives there. Meanwhile, her aforementioned involvement with informal student groups doing activism and service related to peacebuilding had already led her from being a science teacher to working at NURC, where she

> started working from the love I had for peace, but I was not really trained for such work academically. . . . Peace activities have always been a hobby or something of a passion to me. . . . in every area I have been, I was in a group doing peacebuilding, nonviolence, something like those. (Alumna C, S. P.)

The desire to expand formally upon a more informal appreciation for peace work was echoed in the comments made by the fourth alumna I interviewed, who remembered hearing about the M.A. program via the CCM website where it was advertised but said learning about it changed her mind from wanting to focus on Gender Studies to studying peace more broadly.

Once she began her current role, which is "a demanding job at a big organization", she realized that despite her years of experience as a trained counselor, "peacebuilding is an additional field that I could acquire . . . to look into peace in the wider picture, if I would say. That's the reason that motivated me to join" (Alumna A, S. P.).

Multiple faculty members and administrators proudly lauded the strong draw of the program to such esteemed professionals in their respective areas; one in particular explained why

it speaks well of the program's ability to enhance students' effectiveness in the field that there has been such an increase in interest, because

> already, they are in good positions. . . . No, it's not about the degree; it's because they appreciate the content of this program. And they know that this is very useful and can really save the country—really, it's not about promotion, no! It's about understanding what you are doing. (CCM Faculty A, S. P.)

Consequences of program decisions for student outcomes. Admittedly, despite the continued appeal of the program to applicants, by their own admission, the success of students in the M.A. program has been mixed. This subsection will explore the ways in which program decisions may have negatively affected alumni's educational experience, specifically via loss of continuity and student supports, challenges arising from tuition fees, and disproportionate impact by gender, which actually also applies to female staff at the UR.

Loss of continuity and student supports. Between the constant flux of professors onsite at the UR and the short nature of the modular classes, many study participants (alumnae and staff alike) lamented the potential impact such unpredictability had on the student experience, especially in the early years of the M.A. program, but with some continuation of such problems through the present. Even SIDA (2018), in their evaluation of the UR-Sweden program conducted in late 2017, concluded about the master's programs that

> The main challenge seems to be lack of consistency and regularity, both among students who frequently do not show up or who drop out, as well as among teachers and supervisors who do not follow up, particularly when the Swedish counterparts are not present. (p. 62)

The experiences shared by former students aligned with these assertions. For example, one alumna recalled that because foreign faculty members dropped into Kigali only briefly to teach their respective modules, "they didn't have that time that allows them to know the students [so] follow-up was not applicable. . . . Yeah, I don't even remember doing class examinations, because the professors left immediately after teaching, so we had to do things online" (Alumna

B, S. P.). In some cases, the visiting lecturers apparently did not show up at all; multiple alumnae told me that at times, they would have a week off, "not because it was planned like that, but because the professors didn't make it" (Alumna B, S. P.).

Although students often organized themselves so that they were able to provide support for one another via class representatives, and via informal friendships facilitated by group work, nonetheless the lack of official support to keep them on track to graduate was a frequent refrain in participant responses. Admittedly, even with support, the aforementioned intensity of the schedule for M.A. students was undoubtedly going to challenging regardless.

One alumna expressed regret that "because of combining studies and work, we had many of us who dropped out before completion. . . . Even some didn't leave in the middle of the program, but up to today!" (Alumna B, S. P.). She and other alumnae explained that there were many such situations where students had not officially left the program but had failed to defend their master's theses (not unlike those doctoral students in ABD limbo in the United States).

Similarly, many study participants mentioned that in general, the double-edged sword of the program's targeting experienced professionals was that there was an inevitable learning curve for those students being back in the classroom after sometimes 10 or even 20 years away from academia. As I already described, such students were not ramped up into the work expected of them—there was little scaffolding or preprogram preparation for the rigor they would be facing. Instead, they were thrown in quickly, cast as it were into the deep end of the pool.

Indeed, three of the four alumnae I interviewed finished later than intended because of difficulties juggling full-time work and school. Two took formal leaves of absence (one explicitly stating she had been having a mental health crisis precipitated by enormous stress) and

one defended her thesis later than she had planned. The alumna who defended late described the circumstances leading to this outcome in the following way:

> I took some time off to do only the classes, because it was too much for me. . . . Yeah, if it could be relaxed a bit maybe. . . . But again, two years is not small, it's big enough. Nobody would commit to more, unless you are doing a doctorate maybe. Doing a master's for more than two years would be too much. (Alumna A, S. P.)

The conundrum she expressed over the program feeling impossible at times, yet the infeasibility of stretching it out to longer than two years was a problem many others agreed was puzzling, students and staff alike.

One faculty member who also serves in UR administration admitted that "most of the time, they don't have enough time to do their research, because of their work and all that" (UR Administrator E, S. P.); he offered the anecdotal example that M.A. students are often so busy that when they are assigned readings, they have no time to do more than "basically just look on his or her phone while they are coming [to class] to see one or two words about the subject" (UR Administrator E, S. P.). Even so, he argued that

> the pressure on students is not a problem for the University as something they are not doing right. That's the way it is. . . . I don't know how we can deal with it really, but that's the biggest challenge . . . [but] there is always room for improvement. (UR Administrator E, S. P.)

Yet he agreed that extending the program to take three years instead of two, for example, would not be attractive to most working people. Because this viewpoint was widespread, it would seem to indicate that program stakeholders would prefer consideration of potential solutions that would work within the existing two-year program structure.

Challenges arising from tuition fees. A similarly perplexing issue facing the M.A. program are the consequences of tuition fees on student outcomes and program attractiveness to applicants. Specifically, the fact that the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation

offers no funding to its students, while the other three M.A. program iterations do offer such monetary support (if only from Government or organizational partners) was a frequent negative aspect of the program cited in discussions with my interviewees. The Acting Director of CCM at the time of my interviews clarified that changes are coming that will even further constrict available funding to support students, specifically that "the change will not be to provide support to peace and conflict students, because the trend of the Government is to make education [increasingly] private. So, the change will be to not give scholarships to Genocide Studies [students]" (CCM Faculty C, S. P.).

Such a shift in Government funding away from public higher education, while allowing the private HLI sector to take up the slack is not unusual, especially in the developing world. That being said, I will explain what limited information I was able to obtain about exactly what situation potential M.A. students are faced with in attempting to fund their graduate education and say that I can only hope they find it easier to untangle the various realities than I did during my field work.

What I was able to deduce from my conversations with study participants and from what is available on relevant informational websites is that if students cannot pay for tuition themselves or secure funding from their employer, they also have the option to seek out loans specific to those studying at Rwanda's public institutions (while apparently studying at private HLIs or at overseas universities requires an entirely different process).

According to my study participants at the Higher Education Council (HEC), loans for undergraduate or graduate study at Rwanda's public institutions were once administered by the Rwanda Education Board (REB), but that mandate has since shifted to the HEC, which sets

policies about the determination of student loan funding, and to the Rwanda Development Bank (BRD), which now handles disbursement of funds and subsequent repayment and recovery of loans. One of my HEC contacts clarified that "the Council is not directly involved in student financial support", but that in setting policies that structure those supports, the HEC is guided by conditions that have changed in recent years, namely that

> it's been tailored in such a way that only those who show financial need as ascertained through the ubudehe system [receive loans]. . . . And also, beyond financial need, there has to be academic merit. So, those are the two factors that are considered. (GoR Leader C, S. P.)

To clarify, the *ubudehe* system to which this participant refers is a Rwandan community tradition repurposed as part of the Home Grown Solutions (HGS) Department at the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) to alleviate poverty, and it "refers to the long-standing Rwandan practice and culture of collective action and mutual support to solve problems within a community" (RGB, 2017c).

Whereas in past centuries, *ubudehe* was a mechanism largely geared towards providing what amounted to microloans for the building of housing or expansion of agricultural activities, today it has expanded to provide funding for modern needs, such as higher education. These loans often filling a gap by allowing individuals and communities to access capital in situations that would normally be deemed too low level or risky by modern financial institutions. This program is one of many in the HGS Department that has garnered international praise, even winning the United Nations Public Service Award for service delivery excellence in 2008, and "today *ubudehe* is one of the country's core development programs" (RGB, 2017b).

Would-be graduate students hoping to secure funding through the *ubudehe* channels often find that not only must they demonstrate financial need and academic merit in order to receive a

loan, but the process to be approved can apparently take many months, and does not necessarily include funds to offset living expenses for those students who may either need to work fewer hours or to relocate in order to matriculate.

In acknowledgment of this tricky situation students face, the CCM Acting Director also added that "at the same time, there is an arrangement with banks to create a service, loans for study. . . . Even some insurance companies are investing in this area" (CCM Faculty C, S. P.), which he said may help offset the gaps in funding not covered by the students, their organizations or Government sources. One of the UR administrators similarly said that sometimes the University is able to offer a reduced application fee or to offer its own scholarships on an ad hoc basis, though these supports are less frequent and quite limited.

However, he did say one frequent form of assistance offered by the UR is the option for students (including those in the Peace Studies M.A.) to pay in installments, that "if the school fees are maybe U.S. $500 or U.S. $1,000, the first time you can pay U.S. $200. Then maybe in another month, you pay U.S. $300 so that as you are working, you pay it" (UR Administrator C, S. P., corroborated by CCM Faculty C, S. P.). Even with such staggering of payments, one faculty member and former CCM administrator stressed that students often still cannot make payments regularly enough to continue in the M.A. program without interruption, resulting in many dropouts and stopouts, especially between the first and second year of the program (CCM Faculty D, S. P.).

That being said, the earlier-mentioned UR administrator pointed out that one of the appealing reasons to recruit international students from elsewhere in Africa for the M.A. program was that often if they work for an agency within their government, that agency or

ministry will normally sponsor the student, and that from a financial standpoint, "it's better to deal with an institution than dealing with individual students" (UR Administrator C, S. P.). As later portions of this chapter and the next discuss, such opening up to globalized perspectives may an attractive prospect for the program, but numerous study participants expressed wariness at recruitment of international students drawing attention away from supporting the Rwandan students initially targeted as the core program beneficiaries.

The Rwandan students at the core of the M.A. program are, of course, a very small subset of Rwandan society, given that they are self-selected to participate by whether they can afford to do so. As one UR faculty member/administrator summarized the M.A. student demographics,

> the reality is that most of the people are those working, the reason being that they can afford to pay for themselves, or their institutions decide to sponsor them. . . . [But actually] at the moment, it's mainly students who are paying for themselves. (UR Administrator E, S. P.)

The Acting Director of CCM went even further when, upon confirming this difficult reality, he asserted that "if you consider the requirements for admission and the process—the whole process—school fees maybe can be discriminative, because there is a need to have a good position to be able really to pay within two years", especially since he reported that the full cost of the M.A. (in 2017) was U.S. $4,000, which may sound like a relative bargain compared to graduate degrees that cost 10 or 20 times that amount in the U.S., but that "for someone who has a salary below U.S. $500; it will be hard for him to pay U.S. $4,000 within two years" (CCM Faculty C, S. P.).

I found myself frequently puzzling over the big question: if this outcome is so likely, why did CCM and the UR decide in the first place to offer funding to Genocide Studies M.A. students and not to Peace Studies M.A. students? The simplest answer I was able to elicit came from one

longtime UR administrator, who clarified that CCM, with SIDA's logistical and financial support, agreed upon their original contract to provide master's level teaching for only the Genocide Studies program.

The Peace Studies program came later, as did its sister program geared towards the police, and the Security Studies program, but these latter two programs are paid for directly by the military and police bodies whose students are being trained. He elaborated on the significance of this evolution of programs to say that "you know, when something is not in the agreement, it is not easy to support something that is a deviation. So, maybe with this new agreement, if they included that, it would be supported" (UR Administrator C, S. P.), an optimistic viewpoint not shared by many other study participants.

As I reported earlier, if anything, most interviewees gave me the impression that funding for student tuition, if anything, would be constricting further rather than expanding, even with continued SIDA support. On the other hand, even with the heavy investment required to participate, interest from potential applicants in the peace studies M.A. has continued to grow, even without attached funding support. One former faculty member and high-level administrator now in the NGO world candidly reflected that

> people enrolled in Genocide Studies were studying because they had been paid, and a degree in this country was mattering very much, whatever degree you can have. So, people were saying, "I have a scholarship, let me do [the program]", but not really convinced that they need it to solve a problem. But the *other* program has been very attractive. (UR Administrator H, S. P.)

He concluded that from what he could see, the interest students brought to the Peace Studies master's was an outgrowth of their conviction that its content would genuinely enable them to be more effective in their work, as compared to willingness to participate simply because they are being paid to do so.

Despite the growing interest in the program and perspectives of graduates about how much it helped them, alumnae stressed that the financial burden nonetheless has undoubtedly negatively impacted students and increased their likelihood of instability while participating. When I asked one alumna from the first cohort if she had witnessed students struggling with the burden of having to pay for themselves, she emphatically answered, "Yes, yes, very much so. Even me, I paid late—very late!—because I had to pay from my salary, and I graduated later, because I delayed to pay" (Alumna A, S. P.). This story was far from anomalous; another alumna recalled that "even some didn't leave in the middle of the program, but they haven't been able to present their dissertation [and] graduate due to the lack of money" (Alumna B, S. P.).

One former administrator at the UR expressed strong concern at how frequently students struggle this way, in the M.A. program and at the UR in general and argued that ineffective resolution of this problem has the potential to dramatically detract from the UR's competitiveness and long-term growth as an institution.

He described to me how when he was coordinating a different UR master's program a few years prior, he had fought with the University to reduce the school fees because they were losing many potential students to competing private universities such as Kigali Independent University (ULK), Mt. Kenya University, and even international institutions with comparable programs, but much lower tuition (ex. RWF 1.8 million as compared to the UR's RWF 2.4 million charge). His explanation for this enrollment loss was that

> when you are in a country where what matters is for people to have a diploma or to have a degree, when people would come, they would look at the school fees [rather] than to look at the attractions of the program . . . and yet the program is unique! (UR Administrator H, S. P.)

He went on to draw a similar comparison to CCM's M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation, saying that he had heard many people say they would prefer to go to Uganda to the University of Science and Technology, or to Kenya to the University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University, or the Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations to pursue a master's in Peace Studies, rather than go to the UR, because it's very expensive and are not convinced the value is correspondingly higher (UR Administrator H, S. P.).

Disproportionate impact by gender. Not only are there arguably socioeconomic disparities because of programmatic decisions, but also, according to my study participants, there is a disproportionate impact by gender as well. Here I will explore the ramifications of program decisions on gender parity and equity, beginning with a celebration of areas on which the program and the UR are making progress on the gender front for students, followed by an explanation of harsher realities revealed by conversations with participants as they relate to gender at the staffing level, followed by consideration of why these disparities persist at the UR.

The M.A. Program Coordinator voiced an aspirational perspective expressed by many interviewees, namely that "the group of students I would envision to see, of course, it's a group that is balanced gender-wise" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.). And in fact, multiple CCM staff, both faculty members and administrators, agreed that the M.A. program was succeeding in drawing at least an equal number of female and male students, if not a slight skew towards more female students. One faculty member who previously served as the Coordinator attributed this phenomenon to coincidence, claiming that

> we don't give any preference to [either] of the two sexes. . . . But if you look at the figures, at least for the ongoing, present intake, females are dominant, and I have a feeling that they were even dominant in the previous intake. (CCM Faculty D, S. P.)

He further asserted that although he was not aware of official statistics on the subject, he had not found in his observations that female students were any more likely to leave the program without finishing than male students.

The Acting Director corroborated this outcome, even going so far as to say "I think it is also a collective measure that is available in our society. Generally, we have a balanced presence of females in our programs because of other gender programs in the country" (CCM Faculty C, S. P.). Indeed, Rwanda has made a concerted effort to work towards gender parity in education at various levels of schooling. One intriguing phenomenon cited by a Western UR faculty member I interviewed, has been the increase in male students wanting to study issues related to gender parity, perhaps indirectly due to Rwandan progress on these issues.

This faculty member told me that as far as her male students' commitment to engaging in discussions, "in general, they were actually among the best! . . . And also, the women will make sure they talk, because the want to hear from them" (UR Faculty A, S. P.), particularly on issues related to patriarchal structures and inequities. To clarify, she said she found herself impressed that her female students were not overly deferential to the male students in any stereotypical way, but rather that because male students are often motivated to join such programs by their work in areas like child protection and usually have to pay for themselves, female students trusted their commitment and genuine concern.

She also noted female students' appreciation for their male compatriots' understanding that, regardless of equitable intentions, "they themselves are part of the issue" (UR Faculty A, S. P.), thus hinting at these students' deep awareness of structural violence and privilege, regardless of gender. She raved about the experience teaching about gender as a faculty member,

saying that “gender is also a subject where they want to tell you what they think. They want to tell you their own experience, so really, every student was like that” (UR Faculty A, S. P.).

Most other faculty members with whom I spoke had similar positive memories of talking with graduate students about gender. Even when I pushed back and asked about discrepancies in how female students are served, particularly by the M.A. program and within CCM, study participants revealed some promising practices that may help close the gap that still exists in the country for females in higher education. For example, one veteran faculty member in the UR for decades pointed out that the UR-Sweden “sandwich” Ph.D. program had developed sensitivity to gender, specifically citing that even though it is indeed significantly harder for female students to leave Rwanda, even for short periods, to pursue advanced degrees due to family obligations, “there are some facilities for women to go there and have their children with them” (CCM Faculty F, S. P.).

Despite such accommodations that may ultimately facilitate more females with doctoral degrees, the primary arena where participants acknowledged that the M.A. program (and the UR in general) still falls short of gender parity is in its academic staffing, both teaching and administrative. One CCM faculty member in particular, whose doctoral work was actually focused on gender, verified that

> males are still dominant. . . . If you look at the University figures, you realize that full professors among women are less than 3%. . . . And yeah, males are dominant at any rank of the University, . . . there is affirmative action in Rwanda, and women are appointed in different positions, but at the university level, it requires that you have published, reached a certain level, have a Ph.D. degree, all those things that the Government cannot give. (CCM Faculty D, S. P.)

He expressed strong regret over this state of affairs, and lamented that even with legal and policy interventions, the systemic inequities that lead to fewer women at the highest levels of academia cannot be remedied overnight, in Rwanda or anywhere else. Nonetheless, he described proactive

efforts the UR is making to constructively address the situation, particularly encouraging women for promotion into leadership positions.

However, at the time of my visit (May and June 2017), the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, and three of the four Deputy Vice Chancellors are males. Furthermore, of the six colleges at the UR (now five, with the upcoming consolidation of the College of Arts and Social Sciences and the College of Business and Economics), only two were led by female Principals, and one had recently been reassigned by the Government to a different service role outside the UR, leaving only one female in a top administrative role. At the time of this writing, the situation has improved modestly, with female Principals or Acting Principals spearheading the College of Agriculture, Animal Science and Veterinary Medicine (CAVM), the College of Medical and Health Sciences (CMHS).

When I asked the aforementioned faculty member/administrator to what he attributed the ongoing gender inequities, he answered that "it is a result of historical injustice, history of discrimination in Rwanda, so it will take time. It will take time" (CCM Faculty D, S. P.). Another CCM administrator agreed that gender parity is a multifaceted issue, some components of which may be outside the scope of the University to directly influence, such as the fact that "people who want to continue their studies are young adults generally, and young adults are generally busy with [income] generation, babies, things like that" (CCM Faculty C, S. P.), the latter of which continues to be handled more by women than men.

IQ19-20: Mechanisms for addressing differences of opinion and conflict resolution. These two interview questions asked the following: How well do you feel differences of opinion are tolerated within the M.A. program community? AND How does program leadership settle

conflict about various decisions? This section will address the two techniques stressed by M.A. program stakeholders used to manage controversy and differences of opinion, particularly availability to students for sharing of concerns and critiques, and deep respect of expertise. At the leadership level, I will then describe the influence exerted on CCM conflict resolution mechanisms by both the UR's complex hierarchical organizational structure and the taboo of complaint in Rwandan culture.

Faculty members as facilitators of learning who respect student expertise. Although most stakeholders with whom I met agreed with the M.A. Program Coordinator in his assertion that "I haven't seen conflicts that require people to sit and mediate between colleagues. I haven't come across such experiences here at the Centre" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.), multiple study participants pointed out that not all forms of conflict are inherently threatening. Indeed, they emphasized that lesser forms of conflict in the form of misunderstandings, controversies and simple differences of opinion are not only to be expected but welcomed in higher education environments.

Most expressed a high value for the instructive nature of such dynamics, claiming that the process of debating, discussing or working through conflict of this nature was an integral part of their experience of the M.A. program. In fact, this priority proved equally resonant for alumna, faculty members, and administrators. Of particular relevance to the implementation of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation, my interviewees nearly unanimously stressed the point that one of the program's strengths was the unique way in which CCM faculty members acted as facilitators of learning, rather than lecturers there to impart wisdom, and instead demonstrated deep respect for student expertise as colleagues in the field of peacebuilding.

Actually, numerous faculty members even used the word "facilitator" explicitly, when I asked them to describe how they saw their role in the classrooms of the M.A. program. One inspiring response from the Program Coordinator, who also teaches in the program, was that

> my classes interact! I'm here as an example, . . . but you also have knowledge. . . . There is a way you understand these issues, so it's important that we learn from each other. . . . I always say, "feel free to share with us—what do you think about peace?" Such that we build from this, all of us. Personally, I think it's really important to share experiences. (CCM Faculty E, S. P.)

He used the word "facilitator" numerous times in our conversation, as did another faculty member/UR administrator who explained that in most of the M.A. modules, only 40% of students' grades are from a final exam, whereas 60% are from assignments involving critical writing, oral presentations, class debates, and various group work, thus allowing "academic staff to encourage students to do more of their own research, their own teaching. So, we encourage people to participate" (UR Administrator E, S. P.).

Another longtime professor in the program agreed and told me with a hearty laugh that "as an academic, you *have* to be open [and] it's interesting to have enough time for students to debate. . . . That's the challenge we have to face, to say 'please, be free!' You know, they have many things to share!" (CCM Faculty F, S. P.). He noted that such an engaging environment with complex students draws some extremely high-quality local professors who are respected practitioners as well, such as Senator Nkusi Laurent, who has been leading classes at the UR, among others with high-level positions.

The extraordinarily high quality of both students and colleagues was echoed by most participants, with one Western faculty member even saying it was a bit intimidating at first, that

> I was coming from a very theoretical background, so I had to completely change my way of teaching, my pedagogy, my approach—everything! . . . What they taught me first and foremost was to think about how you teach according to the people you have [in your classes]. . . . I was teaching, but I was learning a lot. (UR Faculty A, S. P.)

Rwandan and foreign professors alike agreed that teaching students in the M.A. program was a mutually beneficial exchange of complex ideas. Another poignant example of this kind of faculty member self-reflection and willingness to adapt came from a faculty member who now serves as a leader at a Government agency, who explained that

> you have the students, but at the same time, they are a resource—a source of key information to understand things, and it was helpful for other students to have those persons [present in their cohorts]. . . . Because I was used to teaching the undergraduates, to meet those persons with the heavy experience, it was for me interesting for my course, for my preparation, the improvement of it, not only things from books, but from experience of persons. (CCM Faculty A, S. P.)

So it was that I found many teaching faculty members, regardless of their backgrounds, emphasized that teaching the M.A. students challenged them to continually improve their material to ensure it was relevant and useful to the particular students they faced in their classrooms.

These kinds of sentiments were shared by the alumna in my study as well; they experienced their professors in the program as facilitators rather than transmitters of knowledge. One alumna praised the classroom dynamic, remembering that "we used what lecturers gave us as theory, and shared by comparing with what we learned from the field, so our classes were very interesting! Even sharing between students [was] very helpful for continuing and improving the work" (Alumna D, S. P.). Similarly, another alumna, when I asked if she found it easy to speak openly about one's opinions in classes, adamantly replied that it was "very much so! It was open and good, and very sort of dynamic" (Alumna A, S. P.), recalling fondly that faculty members took the time to even ask individual students with particular expertise relevant to given discussions to offer their perspective at those time, to enhance the learning of the group.

In that spirit of appreciating the contributions of anyone with experiences from the field, another alumna offered appreciation for how frequently faculty members would invite a variety

of guest speakers, to add further nuance to class discussions (Alumna D, S. P.). The opportunity to learn not only from program faculty, but from each other and from other colleagues working in peacebuilding has even led some alumnae to markedly change their practice in their professional roles. For example, one alumna now working in early childhood peace education described to me how her approach to training teachers on the use of debate has evolved, saying

> one of the causes of genocide in Rwanda was that culture of blind obedience, lack of freedom of expression. So, we say in the debate [that] the teacher needs to understand that it's not because he is the teacher, so the student is completely an idiot, that he is like an empty mind that has to be filled. He thinks, he has opinions, and the teacher should build on the things the student thinks they know, and then maybe shape it [and] to develop appropriate ways to address the teacher when he is not in agreement with what is being said. (Alumna B, S. P.)

Relatedly, as one faculty member teaching about legal mechanisms to address responsibility after the Genocide eloquently asserted, "for me, it's not a problem for students to participate, because the issues I teach are daily issues people have gone through, you know? . . . things on which we have on our opinion, whether you went to school or not" (UR Administrator E, S. P.).

Nearly everyone with whom I spoke exuded this kind of respect for the wisdom of lived experience, alongside traditional sources of knowledge often privileged in universities. One other memorable example of such deference to experience came from the Program Coordinator, who told me about a course he taught on international development that was not in the M.A. program, but which has informed his practice there. In this course, he remembers that there was a very diverse group of students from four continents, who frequently disagreed, sometimes passionately, about the best ways to improve the lives of people.

He told me that leading this unique class taught him to guide students into having an openhearted mindset that respects the expertise of others while also valuing their own expertise, an attitude that "don't fill me with what you are full of, thinking this is the only food that exists

in the world. . . . To what extent do you respect my understanding or [even] my self-understanding?" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.).

Complex hierarchical organizational structure. One of the four Deputy Vice Chancellors patiently walked me through the administrative structure at present. He said that the University governance structure begins with the Chancellor (who actually does not reside in Rwanda), and then the Vice Chancellor, who does live and have an office at the main Kigali campus in Gikondo, supported by four Deputy Vice Chancellors (DVCs), each of whom leads multiple Directorates. These positions include DVCs for Academic Affairs and Research, Finance, Administration, and Institutional Advancement.

The DVC I interviewed told me that "the policies we agree on, when it comes to implementation, the Directors below are responsible for that task of implementing. And then even, we have a structure for them, like at College level, their counterparts are Directors at University level" (UR Administrator B, S. P.). What this structure means is that each of the six colleges has their own dedicated Principal, Director of Research, Director for Teaching and Learning, Coordinator for ICT services, and many other such replicated positions, as well as its own College Academic Council. Even Schools within the Colleges sometimes have their own specific leaders and committees.

It is not the purpose of this study to comment or offer evaluation of this structure, but only to reflect what participants communicate about its impact on them. In the case of this particular DVC, he admitted that although

> there are channels of communication, sometimes there are glitches—sometimes people, for example, don't disseminate information as quickly as they should, or people forget to put information on websites, so you get occasions of people saying, "we didn't know." But when we [make] major decisions like restructuring the location, we do organize wider workshops for Directors, Deans and every Department, and even sometimes other staff, to have a face-to-face engagement and discussion. (UR Administrator B, S. P.)

Unfortunately, confusion arising from unclear communication or even technical issues was a problem frequently mentioned by other study participants. This disadvantage was even evident in the fact that nearly every UR-affiliated person I interviewed gave me their personal email instead of their University email, apologetically explaining that the latter was less reliable.

Even more extreme, one Western faculty member who taught graduate students for three years told me that during her entire employment with the UR, she was never given a University email, even after numerous attempts and complaints, and remembers that even her supervisor, at a center Director level, was not using her UR email address because of technical problems (UR Faculty A, S. P.).

Another lecturer with whom I spoke told me that a training the UR had held that was geared towards mentoring female academics was less successful than it could have been, simply because the organizers were unable to get reliable email addresses for all of the relevant potential participants to let them know about it. This situation is all the more problematic, given that Rwanda does not have a national mail service, nor faculty member mailboxes.

Distaste for public complaint in Rwandan culture. Finally, based on the responses from study participants, I found that mechanisms for dealing with conflicts in the M.A. program (or the UR generally) are influenced heavily by widespread Rwandan distaste for public complaint. I will explore interviewee perspectives on this issue, both Western and Rwandan viewpoints. One Western faculty member discussed the local attitude towards complaint at length, emphasizing it as one of the most important things to understand in grasping the overall Rwandan context.

She explained that the country is growing and is a young society, with many positive things to share and be proud of, but that

> they don't really want to talk about negative things, because Rwanda has been portrayed as so negative for such a long time, that now they really want to shift—they really want to give a totally different image of the country. So, there is this political shift, political will that is very strong, so that's one thing. It's also a cultural thing; I mean, Rwandese never portray themselves as failures, like when they fail, they don't tell you; . . . they try to solve it internally, silently, and then what they portray outside is maybe different from what they actually experience. (UR Faculty A, S. P.)

She further described to me how even in political circles, Rwandans work by consensus, in which leaders have private discussions, then present a unified front once a decision has been reached. If individual politicians or leaders were to come out with critique of a decision publicly, she claimed that they would experience consequences for doing so (a viewpoint that others also hinted at, and which has been reflected in news stories about Rwandan politics for many years).

Although not the focus of this study, this dynamic of unanimous agreement and buy-in affects my investigation of the M.A. program in that, as this faculty member summarized it, "I trust that this is a cultural and political thing that is also reflected in all domains of work here" (UR Faculty A, S. P.).

Indeed, she told me about a popular Rwandan maxim in this vein that says "*intorentiganya, ishaka ibisubizo"*, which means "the person that is chosen never complains but will look for an answer". The implication of this saying is that anyone bringing a critique should come ready with a recommended solution. On the face of it, this attitude does not contradict the earlier-discussed focus on critical thinking as an important leadership trait to stress for students.

However, she argued that such critical thinking is significantly stifled when there is not only the aforementioned fear of reprisal, but also "the idea that you are a better person if you don't speak out or complain. . . . [Otherwise], you are a bad Rwandan; you are not following the culture—you are not a true Rwandan, [but] a coward or even a traitor" (UR Faculty A, S. P.). As a result, she explained that people are willing to suffer a great deal of injustice or mistreatment

without complaining or protesting, and that although she admires their resilience, under circumstances like the months-delayed salary payment for UR staff happening when we spoke, perhaps it was not productive to keep silent.

Many Rwandan study participants acknowledged there is a widespread, sometimes counterproductive attitude that they have been through so much as individuals and as a society during the Genocide that few issues are worth creating conflict over; however, at least for some of the Western stakeholders in the M.A. program, there was the sense that "really, to be honest, that was the side of the UR that was frustrating—the lack of space for discussion when we were actually seeing things that were not going well" (UR Faculty A, S. P.).

In contrast, one Rwandan administrator referenced the *gacaca* courts as a related example of how the Rwandan emphasis on community agreement works well for their culture, even with its inherent tradeoffs. He too referenced the Rwandan cultural norm that "in your house, you try to solve conflicts before they get out of your house. . . . But, you know, they consider [their neighbors] also to be like a family—an extended family" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.), and as he insisted, one does not air grievances publicly about one's family.

One civil society peace leader with whom I spoke (a graduate from another UR program), agreed with this ethical perspective, elaborating for me that

> here, people are kind of private. And from our values as Rwandan people, we like resolving problems internally . . . instead of taking to the streets. [But] if there are issues, people would advocate peacefully, and then things get fixed, of course, considering the capacities of the nation. So, people try to understand, you know; it's more of a family. (CSO Leader F, S. P.)

Although such circling of the wagons or closing of the ranks (as it were) was acknowledged to have its advantages for order and unity, other Rwandan interviewees admitted that such a dynamic can make it difficult to know where one stands, either interpersonally or

organizationally, "because Rwandans, you can ask a question and the answer is 'mmm-hmm' . . . and for Rwandans, it means a million things. So, how do you capture that kind of information?" (CSO Leader D, S. P.), whether in evaluations of programs, research settings, or other arenas where candor is typically sought.

All that said, for the purposes of this study, my interviewees frequently lauded the fact that even if it is anomalous in Rwandan culture overall, the atmosphere of the M.A. program itself and of CCM is one in which students and faculty members alike seem to feel free to speak freely about their opinions or concerns, however controversial. One professor summarized her classrooms as places where she successfully "managed to create a stage for discussion, so people were feeling free to air out complaints, to criticize . . . because they knew it was a safe space" (UR Faculty A, S. P.), even sometimes teasing or joking with one another in a respectful way as they engaged in debates.

Even aspirationally, study participants insisted that CCM attempts to march to the beat of its own drummer in terms of how the Centre treats differences of opinion; for example, the Program Coordinator stressed to me that

> an ideal group of students I would wish to see is a group that is committed, *really* committed to listen[ing], to learning from each other. And I think it's also a good idea to see all those people, how do they manage their diversity, their experiences? . . . How do they manage [conflicts] using different approaches from their experiences? (CCM Faculty E, S. P.)

The strong desire to create cohorts of experienced students who will engage thoughtfully and openly with one another, facilitated by faculty members who respect their unique perspectives was at the heart of most participant responses, and was my strongest takeaway from interviewees on the subject of conflict resolution in the program.

Research Question/Discourse Theme 3 and Interview Questions 21-24: INSIGHTS

From the discussion of impact and detailed descriptions of program implementation, we now move into an analysis of participant perspectives on the insights the M.A. program can offer the fields of peace education and educational leadership. Specifically, I will address their responses to the last four interview questions, explaining in detail their viewpoints on how successful the program has been (and on what basis), what improvements they would recommend the program make in the future, and what makes it both unique and perhaps misunderstood, especially as a peace studies program in the Rwandan context.

IQ21: Perceptions of success. This interview question asked the following: Overall, do you feel the M.A. program (and Rwanda peacebuilding work generally) is succeeding in meeting its goals? Why or why not? I will use this section to address how effective my participants consider the M.A. program to be, and will include differentiated perspectives from alumnae, CCM leaders, and interviewees affiliated elsewhere in or outside the UR.

Alumnae perspectives: General satisfaction with but a few caveats. Among the four M.A. graduates I interviewed, all had largely positive things to say about their experiences. Despite some exceptions to their enthusiasm, their overall assertions indicated that the program had served them well, and that the degree had made them more effective in the field and enabled their career advancement.

For example, one alumna, in response to my inquiry about whether she got what she wanted from the program replied, “Yes! Really, really! Though it was not easy combining studies with work” (Alumna C, S. P.), while another replied “surely, I did. I *did* get what I

wanted, but I think maybe it could be improved further. . . . There is work stress, so if you combine it with your school, with your family, then it becomes triple" (Alumna A, S. P.).

A third alumna from the first promotion had a similarly mixed reaction, initially offering high praise, but also adding areas of weakness; specifically, she recalled having qualified lecturers and a well-organized schedule, but then "when I talk with my fellows who were coming after, they told me there was some irregularity of offering the courses. . . . So, I can recommend making the timeline consistent and also respecting the program as planned" (Alumna D, S. P.).

Finally, the fourth M.A. graduate with whom I met, also from the first promotion, had glowing remarks, but with a few cautions, saying that

> I got absolutely what I wanted. . . . The continuity was there, and personally I appreciated that one course having three professors gave me the opportunity to engage with different people, and it was in a seminar where you have multiple presenters. So, for me, it was interesting seeing the course in the perspectives of different people. But the way it was constructed, the logical flow was there, . . . but as I said, the follow-up at the personal level, [they] wouldn't know that I have not been coming, and that's something that could allow the person to struggle. (Alumna B, S. P.)

This last student's comments were the most tentative and distanced in their critique, but it should be noted that she was the only one of the four alumnae who finished the program in the two years intended.

Nonetheless, even with the caveats they offered to their praise, even the three students with more personal criticisms expressed gratitude for how the M.A. program had strengthened their ability to engage in peacebuilding, a result that grew out of participation from the very beginning and even motivated them as they were still completing the coursework. For instance, one alumna recalled fondly that

> when you are a student, you can get tired, but in that [program], because it had similarities with my job—my daily work—I didn't get tired. Every time, I would feel everything from the content, because I knew it would be very important for us who are working in the field of peace, especially in this country, postconflict. . . . Yeah, I have been built by the experience, and courses from there. (Alumna D, S. P.)

She specifically referenced how the program had made her more confident in her ability to not only coordinate effective research initiatives, but to juggle multiple complex projects at once because it taught her to organize teams and delegate. Her confident demeanor came through in her synopsis that "even when you talk with our head of this institution—yeah! Really, the program helped us to improve our work. . . . So, I can say, even my personality, the program was helping me. Yeah, I'm very effective!" (Alumna D, S. P.).

The two other alumna with more adamant critiques similarly tempered those caveats to their praise with personal stories of how the M.A. program has moved their careers forward and, from how it struck me as the listener, even their sense of calling as peacemakers. One of these young women even described the inner change she experienced in an almost cathartic way:

> It was a special opportunity to explain myself about the things I have been doing without knowing this has a theoretical, academic [foundation]; I have been doing it naturally as a Rwandan who has been through the whole story and someone who wanted to give my contribution. (Alumna C, S. P.)

The other program graduate concurred that her participation "completed exactly what I was doing as [individual] practice in the psychosocial field, and I'm happy to be a peacebuilder. . . . It helped me to open up into the international. . . . So, now I have many ideas that I can contribute" (Alumna A, S. P.).

CCM perspectives: Wide reaching impact, but still needs rigorous evaluation. In the same spirit of M.A. program alumnae, those faculty members and administrators affiliated with CCM had largely positive outlooks about the program's success, with notable pride about its impact, yet an emphasis on the ongoing need for continuous improvement. The M.A. Program Coordinator offered a synopsis echoed in the perspectives of many study participants, in her assertion that

> I think the program contributes actually to break that misinformation or misunderstanding about what is peace anyway [and that] we don't have a situation where we achieve total peace. I don't think it exists. . . . 100%? I don't think so, but we need to understand this, and try to critically analyze these issues. Yes, we have 80%—is it enough? Okay, but what about [that other] 20%? (CCM Faculty E, S. P.)

This tireless attitude towards examination of the areas in which peace remains incomplete was an ethos he felt strongly that students have embraced because of their program completion.

Furthermore, he pointed out that it is an outcome that has been magnified by the large number of graduates who have gone on to serve in different parts of Africa, whether as Rwandan expatriates or international students returning to their home countries better equipped to contribute to peace (CCM Faculty E, S. P.). Another longtime CCM faculty member, now a Ph.D. student in Sweden, similarly expressed pride when he told me about one sentiment program leadership had agreed upon when reflecting on its efficacy, namely that "there is really no other place that you can talk about Peace Education that will be better than Rwanda, because of the national context" (CCM Faculty B, S. P.).

However, when I raised the issue of whether there was an undue amount of Government influence on Rwandan peace education with one of my most candid study participants, his adamant response offered even an even more nuanced perspective on the perceived success of the M.A. program. Although he emphasized that there are certainly forms of indoctrination in all arenas of Rwandan society, including perhaps other parts of the UR, nonetheless he asserted that

> I know the Centre. It was not ultimately created with the purpose of channeling Government ideology [but] for research, which can be misused, but without being created for that purpose. . . . As far as I'm concerned, [CCM] is indeed the center for peace. (CCM Faculty G, S. P.)

He pointed out that because he was not at all hesitant to share other recommendations and critiques with me, if CCM was somehow compromised by external political pressures, he would

have readily let me know. Instead, he described it as a kind of oasis within an otherwise highly politicized environment, where genuine learning in the service of peace takes place.

This assertion is not to say that CCM leaders are blind to ways in which the M.A. program or the Centre itself are less than perfect. For example, one of the most veteran professors with whom I spoke admitted without prompting "so, yes, we have been learning things by doing; we are making mistakes, of course, but the most important thing is, have we corrected them? Have we *tried* to correct them?" (CCM Faculty F, S. P.).

In the same sentiment, this faculty member drew in CCM's dynamic with its foreign partners and how they relate to the Centre's self-assessment of success; he explained that although those funders bring their particular frames of reference and "they have their approach of peace and development; [even so] some programs were okay, while others were not. And this was very important to discuss with them" (CCM Faculty F, S. P.).

Thus, CCM leaders emphasized that they have made it a point to be open to weaknesses, including those pointed out by others, but to ultimately craft the programs according to their own vision. The Acting Director, in our discussion about his perceptions of program success, reminded me that

> one of the components of the program was also capacity building in teaching and research in this area, which has been really very well-done, because from 2003, we have around 12 or 15 graduates, Ph.D. holders from Göthenburg. Which means, yeah, we have capacity, in fact, to teach in this specific area. (CCM Faculty C, S. P.)

Other study participants similarly expanded the conversation about what success looks like for the M.A. program to include the larger picture of how it has served its original intended purpose, namely to train up a cadre of qualified scholar-practitioners, both to build peace in Rwandan society and to ensure CCM itself is sustainable as a local endeavor.

The need to work towards measuring impact at the levels of both student success and capacity building is an arena to which many interviewees drew my attention. One faculty member connected this imperative to the UR Strategic Plan, in which "it's clearly stated, whatever you are doing now, it should have impact on the community. Even our funders require that; . . . the constant theme that often comes is impact, impact, impact, [but] there is a lack of empirical work" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.). Furthermore, he confirmed that CCM leadership is actually planning to conduct research on the subject of its impact, hopefully research that is crosscutting among the UR's colleges since many of the M.A. program courses are interdisciplinary and with additional funding directed from the UR-Sweden program.

Non-CCM perspectives: Focus on success as influence. From the vantage point of those leaders outside CCM, whether elsewhere in the UR or in civil society, the common refrain among study participants when asked about whether they perceived the M.A. program as successful was an admiration of its goals and achievements, with most of these individuals basing their opinion on the influence the program has had or could have in Rwandan society. For example, many participants cited their organization's partnership with various M.A. graduates or Ph.D. beneficiaries on peace-related initiatives, and how competent they found those individuals to be in their work.

I had a conversation with a number of non-CCM individuals about whether they believed that a master's program in peace studies is the most effective way to ultimately nurture leaders who promote peace in Rwanda (as compared to, say, K12 peace education, community-based initiatives, legal channels, etc.). One faculty member who has worked with M.A. students but is primarily affiliated outside CCM replied that "I'm sure that's the right avenue—I mean, to create

and to train and teach these people that are at the very high level. . . . I can see that they are applying my recommendations, so the impact is more evident" (UR Faculty A, S. P.).

Another longtime faculty member now engaged in civil society offered praise but also critique that mirrored what the CCM study participants said. He recalled an official review of the curriculum that he had participated in the year prior at CCM, and that he had shared with the group there that in his opinion, "it is a good program, and it was needed really, [but] there is a lack of serious reflection on the content, and what really do you want to achieve . . . and what peace initiative are they leading to?" (UR Administrator H, S. P.).

On the subject of sustainability and capacity building, the highest-ranking UR leader I interviewed situated his assessment of the program's success within his viewpoint about the UR as a whole. Specifically, he described how the UR has gone from being ranked 212 among African universities to 96, and has doubled its research output, in only two years (careful to say that another set of rankings actually put them in the top 60!).

He attributes much of that meteoric rise to a marked and intentional increase in publication activity by UR scholars, a solid portion of which comes from CCM, and enthusiastically shared that "what excites me is [that] we are now the second most influential university in East Africa, second to Makerere" (UR Administrator A, S. P.), a Ugandan university founded more than four decades before than the UR and (apart from shorter closures due to strikes), never having withstood a total shutdown or loss of qualified from a catastrophic event like the Genocide.

This administrator proudly stressed that the UR became competitive with such a renowned institution so quickly

> [despite] having come from nowhere! And we have a cumulative citation index about the same as Johns Hopkins University. You know, we know that we don't produce a vast amount of publications, but we do produce quality publications, and our research is always targeted at solving problems in the nation.[7] (UR Administrator A, S. P.)

His positive outlook about the UR's trajectory and CCM's role in contributing to its influence in the world was evident throughout our conversation. Similarly, the administrator in charge of the UR-Sweden program offered very optimistic viewpoints. His particular perspective was especially illuminating since, as he reminded me, "I have been in this program since 2008 actually, so that means all students who have graduated today have graduated under my watch, and many others who have enrolled, so with that experience you can see the growth" (UR Administrator F, S. P.).

In his recollection, during the early years of CCM, the Centre had to practically beg and harass scholars to do more research, and there was very little buy-in yet about the value of hosting local master's programs, whereas today, the programs are growing and thriving, and on the research front, "we are doing competitive research grants [and] we don't even have enough money to satisfy all the applicants!" (UR Administrator F, S. P.), so the quality of funded grants has risen markedly with more competition from UR scholars.

He explained that such trends have allowed CCM to gradually reduce the involvement of SIDA, even with the agency's Peace, Conflict, and Development subprogram being one of its highlighted successes in Rwanda. Indeed, this subprogram has produced more master's and Ph.D. graduates than any of the other 10 subprograms under UR-Sweden and has also trained 22

[7] I regret that I did not ask this interviewee to share the sources of these statistics he references, and upon attempting to verify them, found slightly different figures, but not so different as to debunk his points.

scholars on research supervision to ramp up into having capacity to host a local Ph.D. program (SIDA, 2018, p. 62). As the UR-Sweden administrator described,

> it's still our favored program, because we believe that if we manage to do research on agriculture, do research in health, do research in peace, do research in ICT, as one of the countries that wants to position itself in this area, and mathematics—all these areas are working together! . . . For sure, we have made a huge contribution to the development of the country. (UR Administrator F, S. P.)

His description of peace studies at CCM as fitting elegantly within the broader scope of the University improving its academic standing and its influence on the development process was shared by numerous other study participants as well.

IQ22: Suggestions for improvement. This interview question asked the following: Do you have any thoughts on how the M.A. program and peace work in Rwanda could be better? I should reiterate that for the purposes of this section, the ideas presented are not my recommendations, but rather are critiques that come directly from the participants in my study, those who are invested in CCM and peace work in Rwanda on a daily basis. That being said, in this section, I will summarize the four primary suggestions offered by study participants for how to improve the M.A. program, including the following: increase program accessibility to students, financially and logistically; create deeper partnerships with organizations relevant to students; emphasize psychosocial wellbeing in both content and support structures; and invest in completion of more Rwandan Ph.D.s and broader publications.

Increase program accessibility to students, financially and logistically. Students and staff alike agreed that one of the key priorities for the M.A. program needed to be keeping it affordable and manageable in its structure for target students, in order to ensure the program can survive and continue to grow. Specifically, they argued that accessibility would entail reducing the cost and considering other content delivery formats than the current two-year master's.

Many claimed that fulfilling such a goal would necessarily require program leadership to work towards reducing cost. All four alumnae mentioned this issue to me, with one particularly noting that at its current cost, many qualified students are inadvertently excluded, such that "even when there is a wish, they cannot afford it" (Alumna D, S. P.). Even high-level administrators understood that this is a problem; the participant with the greatest authority of anyone I met cited a recently released report that concluded "more and more students are deciding that university is poor value for the money! Now, how do you create value in that? Because it's expensive to run the University; you're having to charge students a lot of money" (UR Administrator A, S. P.). Numerous interviewees offered opinions in line with the report he cites, wondering whether the benefit of higher education is worth the cost, in peace studies or even generally.

One of the UR-Sweden administrators alluded to this conundrum as well, acknowledging that although the University cannot offset the fees for everyone, the institution *could* offer support and guidance to students as they make their applications for loans and grants through the relevant channels. He explained that those seeking public funding have to submit a concept paper to the Rwanda Development Bank (BRD) and to the Higher Education Council (HEC), but

> sometimes students don't justify really why they need maybe to specialize in peace [studies]. . . . They need also to be backed by [staff] saying, "this is a student in an area that is very important for Rwanda, so this is what maybe the impact is going to be, after they have finished; this is where they are going to help", really showing the intent. . . . So, you can't leave students alone to do that. The lecturers and the Schools, and the Centre [for Conflict Management], they also need to be helping. (UR Administrator C, S. P.)

Such direct, concrete support in the absence of additional funds that can be made immediately available to students was an idea that other leaders echoed in their sentiments.

Similarly, given that there was no imminent influx of new funding, many participants stressed that UR-Sweden may want to consider reallocating funds to offer at least partial tuition relief for Peace Studies graduate students, rather than only funding those in the other M.A.

programs. One high-ranking UR administrator shared that "even the Minister of Education was encouraging these two master's offering scholarships to all students. Because they know that it's very important" (CCM Faculty A, S. P.).

In fact, even those participants more outside the program's sphere of influence agreed that such a shift would be useful. For example, one young man working in social justice advocacy (who himself has attended another program at the UR) made the argument that

> Many Rwandese know what genocide is even more than Raphael Lemkin![8] But we *lived* in it. . . . People know the stages[9] practically [because] they have seen these things take place. Now I think what we need is to sustain. Sustainability of the peace that we have. That's why if we are very lucky, we would have SIDA invest in Peace Studies to have many Rwandese know how to sustain peace. Because with genocide, I think many of us would have a master's, even before going to school. . . . If I was to help Rwanda and had money like SIDA does, I would invest in Peace Studies, give scholarships. These people can be more equipped to lay out strategies. (CSO Leader F, S. P.)

Whether such a policy change is feasible or not, I will not presume to know, but instead will simply report what so many of my participants emphasized: funding assistance for the Peace Studies students would make an invaluable difference in the burden they carry and allow many to matriculate who could not consider doing so under current conditions.

Apart from the financial cost of participation, a number of participants (notably nearly all those working outside of CCM in a civil society context) pointed out that many Rwandans could not realistically relocate to Kigali or spend two years on an advanced degree. With such constraints in mind, numerous study participants recommended that for maximum impact, CCM might consider other delivery formats for at least some of the Peace Studies program content.

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[8] Raphael Lemkin was the prominent Jewish lawyer and activist who first coined the term "genocide", and who also spearheaded development of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted in 1948, and brought into force in 1951 (USHMM, 2019).

[9] He is referring to the 10 Stages leading ultimately to genocidal violence, as put forward by genocide prevention scholar Gregory Stanton (see Stanton, 2013).

For example, one UR faculty member outside of CCM argued that "if now we think about how maybe to do outreach, maybe to reach people in villages, leaders at the local level, [then] you will have to do short courses, maybe. Or you will have to deliver trainings here and there" (UR Faculty A, S. P.). Another veteran CCM faculty member who has also worked in the NGO sector for decades recalls fondly that he himself went through a short program offered long ago by CCM and deeply appreciated the experience.

He explained that "this program was targeting such kinds of people. They have no time to go through one year, or a year and a half. And they need such kinds of concepts and experiences. . . . Yeah, because I knew I *myself* needed really something!" (CCM Faculty F, S. P.). He further asserted that such short training programs offer infusions of funding for comparatively less investment of time and manpower, and yet meets a definite demand for those working in the field in peacebuilding.

Cultivate deeper partnerships with organizations relevant to students. A similarly common theme in participant responses to the question of what could be better about the program was the need to develop a more robust network of partners, not only because it is precarious to sustainability to have only one primary funder, but also because such connections would improve the educational experience for students, the draw of the program to would-be applicants, and future employment opportunities for alumnae. The highest-ranking participant in this investigation gave the most comprehensive summary of the value of partnerships at the UR:

> they are absolutely fundamental! . . . We know that there is a lot of intangible stuff that comes from our partnerships, such as friendships that have been made, ongoing research, or things that trigger our association with people who may be outside the scope of the programs but are associated with other institutions. So actually, when you measure the outcomes or benefits in terms of numbers of master's students, numbers of Ph.D.s, and numbers of publications, that's only part of the story. (UR Administrator A, S. P.)

Actually, according to many participants, the UR (CCM included) walks a tricky tightrope between embracing openness to outside supports and influences versus pushing for autonomy and self-sufficiency.

However, the M.A. program offers particularly compelling lessons in this area, having moved quickly from having primarily foreign teaching staff to mostly local faculty members, albeit with mixed reviews. One alumna who finished late and thus was able to compare the program's quality before and after the transition (and who was not alone in her displeasure) told me that "maybe the partners left too early, before the program became mature. . . . There was really a big difference between the starting group and the second group . . . and it was not better" (Alumna C, S. P.). She recalled, for example, that in the second cohort, two of their Rwandan lecturers leading courses were only at a master's level themselves, which students did not care for, and she said they could feel the difference in quality.

Another alumna pointed out that even many qualified Rwandan faculty members are still adjusting to the academic transition from French to English as the language of instruction, so even if they are in fact content experts, they were not able to communicate that content effectively yet. She offered the example of the Research Methods course she took, in which she felt she was left lacking real confidence in the subject matter, because the Rwandan instructor's English was so limiting (Alumna D, S. P.). Both of these alumnae even went so far as to say that if such issues have not been addressed already in the subsequent years of the program, or are not been dealt with now, that they fear the M.A. program will not continue.

Many interviewees made the argument that having deeper partnerships across a wider range of organizations and institutions would allow for more gradual transitions to self-

sufficiency than the one described above. One UR administrator serving in institutional advancement made a similar point that proactive seeking of appropriate connections is key to the UR's institutional health, and that "the number of students is increasing, but the space, the resources, cannot accommodate that. So, our role is to mobilize more resources, to market the University in order to give the best services we can" (UR Administrator C, S. P.).

Students agreed that deeper partnerships outside the UR would enhance the educational experience of the M.A. program. For instance, one alumna recommended specifically that

> they can make exchanges with universities that have the same program. . . . That way, the program will be more attractive, because [students] feel, "we are going to learn more about the experience of Rwanda, but also around the world. I will be more fully experienced about how it is." Yeah, I think it is very helpful for peacebuilding. (Alumna D, S. P.)

There was a great deal of enthusiasm that came out of this investigation about the possibility of mutual international exchanges (see Chapter 5, for more detailed discussion of this idea).

On the other hand, numerous interviewees stressed the importance of also deepening connections with relevant organizations operating in Kigali, and the fortuitous value of the M.A. program being located there, since so many local and foreign organizations are operating nearby. For example, one former UR administrator (now leading a civil society organization that spearheads peace education efforts) lamented the missed opportunity to involve a greater number of M.A. students and alumnae in the large internationally attended UR conference taking place the very week we had our interview (UR Administrator H, S. P.).

He insisted that there is not nearly enough effort made by CCM or the UR to encourage students to take advantage of such valuable opportunities that are already happening, such as the conference or the monthly CCM planning meetings, which are technically open to students but at which they are rarely in attendance. In fact, he is the only interviewee with whom I had the

chance to meet twice; we talked for over an hour each time, and during both conversations, he reiterated emphatically how important it is to

> connect the objectives of the program with the respective institutions where the students are coming from, to make them relevant when they are back. Then they motivate other students to come in. Otherwise, people are studying, . . . but they don't know what's the institutional linkage with alumnae. . . . If you want to get the program sustainable, this is the only way. And it takes serious partnership. *Serious* partnerships! (UR Administrator H, S. P.)

Not someone I found prone to making arguments without evidence, he supported these comments with an example, citing that the CCM Director is constantly present at his organization anyway for various seminars and dialogues, yet has never taken the initiative to ask about bringing M.A. students to attend such programs, despite the obvious relevance to what they are learning and his enthusiastic willingness to host them.

Although most M.A. students come to the program already working full-time jobs, study participants agreed that they would be unlikely to spend the time and money if they were not seeking to not only improve their work at present, but also to better their prospects for professional growth in the future. With that in mind, many of them made the case that the deepened partnerships would also serve to expand employment prospects for alumnae, particularly in the absence of any dedicated Career Services office for CCM, or even UR-CASS in which it is housed.

One longtime faculty member (who also served a past term as the M.A. Program Coordinator) expressed the strongest and clearest version of this recommendation, saying that

> I think we can do better in terms of future employment by creating opportunities to connect them to potential employers. . . . We just send them to the job market, and we have no follow-up mechanism. They need those kinds of employment mentorships, organizing contacts at the national level, at the regional level, but also at the international level. We can identify opportunities and try to sell their skills [yet] we don't do that. (CCM Faculty D, S. P.)

He insightfully acknowledged that deepening partnerships of this nature would require CCM to engage in a parallel strengthening of data processes, that, for example, "we can even have a database of what they are becoming after they graduated from the Centre [and] this is something I have discussed with Program Coordinator" (CCM Faculty D, S. P.).

Alumnae also liked this idea of the M.A. program cultivating employment-oriented partners, "because they are the first beneficiary of that program; they have contributed!" (Alumna D, S. P.). One alumna argued that because many organizations benefit directly from the capacity building of their staff members who enroll in the program, they would be a natural fit for seeking additional tuition relief for M.A. student (Alumna D, S. P.).

Then again, one of the study participants from the Higher Education Council (HEC) who brought more of a bird's-eye view counterargued that the onus should be on entirely on CCM or the UR to initiate such partnerships. He persuasively stressed the importance of

> the linkage between academia and industry because at the end of the day, we are supposed to respond to skills gaps, to labor market needs [and] to our vision of a knowledge-based economy. . . . But it should be from both sides, because HLIs, they have their core mandate. . . . Now, industry has also to consider education and training as part of their mission. Yes, the private sector should lead it and then should somehow feed into us, enhancing the hands-on [with] apprenticeship, etc. (GoR Leader A, S. P.)

Emphasize psychosocial well-being in content and support structures. One of the more unexpected findings of my study was the especially strong emphasis participants placed on the importance of individual healing and wellness; indeed, whether staff or students, my respondents raised this issue many times, arguing that psychosocial well-being is a critical subject and needs to be addressed in both the content of the M.A. program and in the support structures offered to its students.

In terms of what students learn in the M.A. program, only one of the alumna with whom I spoke came from a background in psychology and counseling, and she confirmed that not only

that she was the only one coming with that expertise in either of the first two cohorts, but also that psychosocial well-being is really not covered in the content. Specifically, she said the program

> doesn't really show the way peacebuilding is in connection to the psychological well-being of individuals. . . . I don't think someone can build peace alone, without building people's hearts. . . . Each person is a unique being and needs a unique sort of support. So, the reintegration process needs a lot of accompaniment [because] the psychological well-being of individuals can really affect or even aggravate the way the conflict is going, and the peace you are trying to build may not stand on a firm foundation. . . . If the individuals are not strong internally, it's like you are building your peace on sand—it's something shaky. (Alumna A, S. P.)

Her synopsis of the consequences for ignoring psychosocial well-being was supported by comments from a civil society practitioner who organizes dialogues around the country and across its borders, and who told me that as Rwandans, "we are having cases of Genocide-related trauma among the second generation, these people who were born after the Genocide. . . . So, in this way, we have intergenerational trauma", but that creating safe spaces for sharing of pain and healing, "this also contributes a lot in rebuilding relationships" (CSO Leader C, S. P.).

Indeed, one young man I interviewed working in human rights law—too young to remember the violence of 1994 directly, but still having lost many loved ones—concurred that "of course, being in Rwanda, a country that experienced genocide, most of the people—almost *everyone*—has traumatic issues. And, of course, having traumatic issues means that you don't have peace at all, inner peace especially" (CSO Leader H, S. P.).

Despite having only been a baby at the time, even a generation out from the Genocide, he described having struggled himself to find serenity and to make sense of the world as it is now, with some success but still some ground to cover. Though he was not directly affiliated with CCM, he told me that given his experiences in peacebuilding, within himself and in society, he

also would advocate for a greater emphasis on psychosocial well-being as part of the M.A. program.

Although none of the three alumnae I interviewed had the expertise to make such compelling arguments as the aforementioned psychologist alumna did for including this topic in program content, all of them emphasized the importance of building up this kind of support for students, and the difference it would make. When I asked about their own experience of the program and what existed when they were matriculating, their answers indicated that such supports were, at best, an afterthought, if they were directly attempted at all.

One young woman was very candid, actually, in her critique; when I asked her whether there was counseling or anything else to help struggling students in the M.A. program, she immediately responded that there was

> absolutely none! No, it was like a business, and we were clients. . . . I remember there was not even follow-up like for a student who would spend a month or more without being in class. Like to ask you, "where have you been? What's going on?" I don't remember those. (Alumna B, S. P.)

The earlier-quoted alumna agreed about there being a dearth of such supports, reporting that "I know of *one* university that has a counselor, only one! [But] they deal with more especially the undergraduates" (Alumna A, S. P.), while a third alumna told me she too had never been directed to any counseling supports, even when she had to delay finishing (Alumna D, S. P.).

Even more dramatically, the fourth alumna with whom I spoke recalled vividly (in such a way that I could feel the pain she endured) that "I experienced a very hard moment at the time. I got stressed and was obliged to go to doctors [and] I was obliged to stop", but when she wrote to CCM staff to inform them and seek feedback on the decision, "I never got a reply, . . . but I do

understand that in a country like ours, this is so small; people don't consider it as a great issue" (Alumna C, S. P.).

The Acting Director pointed out that the UR has a Counseling Service, and that because "they are regular students of the University, [so] they are entitled to all services provided by the University, which means even if they have such kinds of problems, yeah, they can channel that problem to the appropriate service" (CCM Faculty C, S. P.). Another UR administrator mentioned that the UR has a Directorate of Student Welfare, with staff to attend to these needs (UR Administrator E, S. P.).

To hear these responses from CCM and UR staff, one would think students do in fact have options to seek help if they are struggling, and yet that was not the story I heard. Even one of the aforementioned administrators offered the caveat that

> we don't have a lot of resources in terms of people who can listen. . . . So, we have the structures in place, and some people in offices, but they are—like many of us—their competencies are still lacking, their skills are still lacking. Yeah, but that's part of the process; we are much better than we were two years ago. (UR Administrator E, S. P.)

Although alumnae expressed sympathy for why it may be hard for the UR to divert resources to psychosocial supports, with one directly saying that "thinking about such a service in a postgraduate program in my country is not something I would expect easily" (Alumna C, S. P.), all four nonetheless insisted that such support could transform the M.A. student experience.

One M.A. program graduate laughed somewhat incredulously when she adamantly reminded me "it's about peace—it's a peace program! In peace, you talk about healing and counseling [but] it's not just about the theoretical aspect. A peaceful environment for the students should also be there" (Alumna D, S. P.). To her, it seemed illogical that psychosocial

well-being would *not* be an inherent foundation of the program. Another alumna shared this sentiment almost verbatim, saying that

> a peace studies program should be different from other topics and environments of study. . . . It's a lifestyle [but] I think I missed that aspect. Peace is life! Peace is not only theories. . . . But the peace environment was not there. So, I don't know what is done in other settings, but they should also think about it. Some kind of practical attitude of peace in Peace Studies. [In fact], it's not easy, but if we can have such a service in every school in my country, that would be my dream. It's something we need. (Alumna C, S. P.)

She even supported her point further by arguing that she and the many experts spearheading the mainstreaming of peace education into K12 schools have discussed including a counseling component as a best practice, so why should universities not embrace doing the same?

In the same vein, a third alumna recommended that CCM consider creating a center for psychosocial supports, or at least a general gathering place for its students: a compound where they could gather for leisure or organize to do community service together because, as she articulated, "community is life!" (Alumna D, S. P.) and students need it in order to build camaraderie and boost morale.

I cannot stress enough how emotionally resonant this topic was with all four M.A. program graduates. To close this section, I will circle back to the same alumna's wisdom with which I began it, and her visually compelling argument that

> counseling is almost the same as peacebuilding. It's sort of giving peace within oneself. And when you have peace, you give it to your colleagues. . . . It's like climbing steps! You can't start from the top level; you start from the first one. The first one is yourself, as an individual. If it's a family, then it goes to the family, then the neighborhood, then maybe it goes to regional and international [levels]. . . . So, me, I see it as an added value. (Alumna A, S. P.)

As I have reported, other alumnae were united in expressing this poignant entreaty that if M.A. stakeholders would improve the program further, psychosocial well-being needs to be reordered as a higher priority.

Expand investment in completion of Rwandan Ph.D.s, post-docs, and high-quality publications. Finally, the only priority that was brought to the fore by study participants more frequently than the centrality of psychosocial well-being to a successful peace studies program was the urgent importance of funneling resources towards the continued scholarship of Rwandan academics, whether in the form of doctorate degrees, post-doctorates, or more prolific publication patterns.

I will begin with where things stand at present, then describe how interviewees couched this particular suggestion in the argument that building such capacity is what has the most power to sustain the program and CCM. I will also report on their assertions that there is enough demand to justify this focus on scholar support, particularly in the form of a local Ph.D. program in peace studies, and their cautions that doctorate degrees are less useful when they are not matched with parallel support for post-doctorate research in order to keep scholars' momentum moving forward.

At the time of my visit to Rwanda, one of the high-ranking UR administrators I spoke to reported that roughly 45% of the University's staff were doing what he called "meaningful publication", a number he acknowledged was not nearly what they would like it to be, but a huge step forward from 13% when they started[10] (UR Administrator B, S. P.). He offered a comprehensive summary of the state of research affairs with the following comment that

> we want ideally every staff member should be publishing a paper every year, on average. . . . So, the challenge is just to increase the proportion of staff who are research-active, that have Ph.D. training, capacity to produce papers, capacity to write grants and get more money to do research, so those are the challenges, I think. (UR Administrator B, S. P.)

[10] Unfortunately, I neglected to ask him who he meant by "they" and the timeframe he meant by "when".

These issues he raised as the major hurdles the UR faces were in accord with the perspective of one of my study participants from the Higher Education Council, who highlighted in our conversation the complex challenge for HLIs of securing and professionally developing qualified instructors quickly enough to meet the sharply increasing student demand (GoR Leader C, S. P.), especially since by 2050, the African continent's population under the age of 24 is projected to rise by 50%, even with this demographic already being the fastest growing in the region (Sow, 2018).

Unlike psychosocial well-being, this challenge is one that is already very much at the forefront of CCM and UR discussions as an institutional priority, so admittedly, this suggestion from participants may not come as a great surprise. However, the frequency with which study participants raised this issue indicated to me that even with remarkable progress thus far, there is a still a long way to go, and the journey would seem to require continued focus and investment.

For example, one faculty member in the M.A. program who has been a leader at UR since its beginnings pointed out that part of the value of the SIDA partnership is that "CCM has had difficulties with having enough staff a number of times, so this is why this capacity building program is very helpful" (CCM Faculty B, S. P.).

Such capacity building was stressed as benefitting not only the staff but also the M.A. students. The Program Coordinator elaborated on this point with me, saying that "where I think we can be better is working with our students to conduct research. For instance, the theses that they write: what about developing them into research projects that can be published? Probably they could have more impact" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.).

He went on to proudly say that in fact, unlike in American universities, CCM's master's students very rarely do only desk research for their theses; most conduct empirical studies which, he argued, are often on relevant subjects that would be attractive to both local and perhaps even international journals. However, although the effort and topics are laudable, he acknowledged that "we really need to do more to improve the quality of what is being done. As you said, people have a high teaching workload, which is [limiting]. . . . Having said this, we can do more than what we are doing" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.).

I should emphasize here that this opinion is not just representative of CCM staff and administrators; students want this kind of investment in their scholarly rigor as well and were quite adamant in saying as much. One alumna wistfully mentioned the thought of doing a Ph.D. to me and confided that "for me, I dream it. . . . I'll talk about it [but] I really do not know if I will do it. Yet I would wish to do a Ph.D.! And always I say, how can I go about it?" (Alumna C, S. P.). Other alumnae also expressed a desire to continue their postgraduate education, particularly if (or more hopefully, when) a local Ph.D. in peace studies is launched.

Luckily, one of the UR-Sweden program administrators affirmed that such a program was indeed the intended outcome of the new agreement between the institutions, asserting that

> what we want in the end is that we open up this whole thing, that anybody who is interested in doing a Ph.D. can do it, not just because they are going to end up in teaching or in academia or in research, you know? . . . Because we believe that the skill you get from doing a Ph.D. is a valuable skill to appreciate ideas of others, but also really to contribute in a stronger way, in a more thoughtful way. And that is not something required only in the University, it's required everywhere! (UR Administrator F, S. P.)

Increasing the number exponentially remains an explicit goal of the UR; one of the highest-ranking administrators with whom I met reported that whereas Ph.D. holders among the teaching staff had already increased from about 18.5-21%, the aim is to be at more like 60 or 70% (UR Administrator B, S. P.).

However, he also explained that part of why the problem is a thorny issue is that hosting a local Ph.D. program requires onsite, long-term faculty members capable of supervising doctoral theses, for which a cadre of briefly visiting foreign faculty members would not suffice, even as a temporary measure.

This need for supervisory skills illuminated the issue raised by many study participants, namely that increasing the quality of scholarship at the UR must be not only narrowly focused on graduating more Ph.D.s, but also on the broader picture of supporting these high-level scholars in building their post-doctoral publication records, developing the capacity to supervise less experienced scholars, and strengthening their confidence in teaching.

One of the administrators I interviewed who was deeply involved in expanding the UR's research capacity argued that

> having a Ph.D. is one thing, but also being able to have growth in the academic rank is another thing. So yeah, we still have that challenge [but] we have started vigorously to increase our postgraduate program, especially in Ph.D. training, so hopefully within five years, we will be having a very good number of Ph.D. staff. (UR Administrator E, S. P.)

Meanwhile, on the subject of stronger publications, another high-level administrator (this one from a Western country but working in Rwanda for over a decade) offered the example that "the profile of publications done by Swedish universities is at one level, while the profile of publications done by UR is at another level, but the profile of publications that we do collaboratively is so much higher!" (UR Administrator A, S. P.), and so he suggested that efforts to train staff as stronger academic writers might begin with encouragement of these sorts of collaborative endeavors.

Ultimately, the urgent necessity of enhancing the quality of scholarship, and the number of academics engaged in it at high levels proved to be one of the most resonant suggestions for

improvement among study participants. The UR-Sweden primary administrator educated me a great deal on the subject, sharing (for example) that

> how you develop an institution in a small country to really have its own research capacity to contribute to the international discussion. . . . Today, we see a lot of involvement by all people, management and all of them involved in seeing how research can develop better. [But] if you look at the UR, we still need to develop our research capacity. We still need more people who can do research. We don't have enough! (UR Administrator F, S. P.)

Amidst widespread recognition of the University's many strengths and accomplishments, and those of CCM more specifically as well, there was indeed the common refrain from interviewees of how transformative it would be for the M.A. programs and the entire UR community to continue pushing towards academic excellence with this kind of ongoing capacity building.

IQ23-24: Unique program characteristics and misconceptions. These two interview questions asked the following: In your opinion, what makes the M.A. program (and peacebuilding in Rwanda at large) special? AND Is there anything you think people outside Rwanda misunderstand about Rwanda? What would you like them to understand as they learn more about the M.A. program and the Rwandan context it exists in?

This final section will address the two key lessons expressed by participants regarding what the M.A. program and Rwandan peacebuilding in general have to offer the field, namely that peace is a continuous journey requiring ongoing investment and self-reflection, and that this notion is embodied in widespread Rwandan ownership of both programs and progress. These two lessons emerged from discussion with participants about what makes the program (and Rwanda) special, along with what outsiders may be inclined to misunderstanding about the program and the Rwandan context.

Peace is a continuous journey that requires ongoing investment and self-reflection.

Much like the themes of structural violence and ethical responsibility to others, the theme of assessing progress and reconciliation with a nuanced perspective was raised by most study participants as uniquely integral to the M.A. program, specifically celebrating how far Rwanda has come, but continuing to embrace the challenges that remain. One wise alumna eloquently offered the words I have borrowed to summarize this attitude, in her comment that

> at times, people will say we have achieved reconciliation, we have achieved peace, and it's like we are *there*. But from the program, I realize that peace is a continuous journey. . . . So, this is something I learned and that helps me to set a high goal. (Alumna C, S. P.)

A similar sentiment was also expressed by one CCM administrator, who enthusiastically described Rwanda's struggle towards peace in all arenas of society, saying that "of course, it's bearing fruit! What we are seeing today, nobody thought it would be as it is now" (UR Administrator D, S. P.), and explaining that in many ways, the country has become more stable and prosperous than anyone could have initially hoped for.

Yet another respondent who was a leader in civil society peacebuilding and a graduate of a different UR program, told me his perspective (which he insisted many of his colleagues share), which is that

> I used to think that peace means silence of guns…But that changed. That's just relative peace. . . . I used to mistake peace and security. But peace is a combination of many things, especially when we talk about sustainable peace and positive peace. There is a very broad concept that combines everything we see, from having basic freedoms to internal peace. (CSO Leader F, S. P.)

However, many interviewees also cautioned that despite such victories, Rwanda cannot take peace for granted and must continue to consider where potential for escalation of conflict exists, particularly in the form of structural violence.

If there are marginalized voices or people who remain in pain because of the Genocide or for other reasons, many participants insisted that they need to be heard. One longtime CCM administrator and faculty member rhetorically asked

> why do you leave them behind? Just engage with them! They may be having their own reasons; . . . who knows? We may go to 100% reconciliation. What I know is that it's a process. . . . Where will this take you in 10 years, 20, 50, or 100 years? What about your children—where are you going to leave them? (CCM Faculty E, S. P.)

He went on to say many times that the program must remind students that reconciliation takes continual investment.

This driving force behind the program's continued existence was also evident in another high-level administrator's assertion that when it comes to peace education initiatives at the UR, "all we are trying is to have something that will have a strong foundation that will make us get away from our bad history and build a better future" (UR Administrator D, S. P.).

Apparently, students had received this message; one alumna in particular, when considering the themes that she took away from her participation in the program, described a shift in her thinking towards her role in her workplace at a Government Genocide prevention agency. She recalled that "from analyzing what peace [means in its] other aspects, peace in *all* aspects, I was able to see more new programs that we can initiate, . . . to influence here in my institution, people who can bring more than the coexistence that we have" (Alumna C, S. P.). She was far from alone in expressing her gratitude for how the program expanded her imagination for what might be possible in terms of her personal contribution to Rwanda's reconciliation.

Even those outside of CCM doing peace work in Rwanda agreed that peace education, via opportunities like the M.A. program, is absolutely vital to moving in the direction of truly

sustained and equitable peace. One young man working in human rights law and social justice advocacy (and a graduate of the UR for his LLM) beautifully summarized his attitude as follows:

> of course, peace being a cornerstone of every area or every career, it needs many people to care about it. . . . Otherwise, society may have development in terms of buildings, infrastructure, other sorts of development, but if it doesn't have peace, everything is null and void. . . . If you don't have security, then you don't have peace. If you don't have peace, you don't have security. So, it needs some people; it would need every person to care about peace. (CSO Leader H, S. P.)

Another young man serving in peacebuilding agreed that "peace education, to me, is a strategy of trying to use lessons of violence to prevent it in the future" (CSO Leader F, S. P.).

A number of interviewees alluded to the idea that even the M.A. program itself embodies this notion of peace as a continuous journey. One interesting example as such was revealed to me by a faculty member study participant, who explained to me how the program got its name. He recalled that the planning team at CCM was originally planning to call the degree "Peace and Conflict Resolution" or perhaps "Peace and Conflict Management", but that he said, "No, no, no, no—I remember I was fighting—it should be 'Peace and Conflict Transformation'. Because we want to transform things, not only manage them. Not only coexistence but going beyond coexistence to *transformation*" (CCM Faculty G, S. P.). This example was but one illustration of how strongly Rwandans affiliated with the program feel about the need to approach peace holistically and with continual rigor.

Rwandan ownership of both programs and progress is notable in all sectors of society. One particular quality that underscores everything I heard from respondents throughout my field work was their sense of ownership over both the initiatives they attempt in the service of peace and progress on the whole. Two of the clearest examples of study participants expressing a sense of personal mission when it comes to peacebuilding were also among the youngest of my

interviewees. For example, one young man working in human rights law, when asked about his career trajectory, explained

> [as] a post-Genocide country which met or experienced many human rights violations, and of course, which lost peace totally and everything shut down, we will always need some individuals who should be interested with these kinds of work, where they can sit and identify the existing challenges [and] suggest some possible solutions. And I was lucky to be among the few people who can think this way. I think it's a calling, from somewhere I don't know. (CSO Leader H, S. P.)

The other young person whose story demonstrated a high level of personal investment was a participant not more than 25 years old, already working for years in social justice advocacy and peace education. He expressed a deep, but well-considered sense of national pride that undergirds his sense of personal calling, saying that "people would think about Rwanda as a country of violence because of past experience, which is not true. To be honest, I don't feel so much touched and tied as to defend mistakes if there are mistakes" (CSO Leader F, S. P.).

However, with that willingness to consider weaknesses, he shared his conclusion that, of the five countries he had been lucky to visit thus far, "there is no single country I have been to where its people are very respectful to each other like Rwanda. . . . We had Genocide, yes, but we learnt from that and now we are moving ahead as peaceful people" (CSO Leader F, S. P.).

On the other hand, this kind of optimism about Rwanda's future and its worthiness of personal investment was an attitude I saw reflected all the way up to the highest levels of leadership among my study participants. For example, my highest-ranking interviewee by far, a Western UR administrator, lauded the fact that although academia can be notoriously plagued by clashes of overinflated egos, he had found the UR to be refreshingly focused on a kind of servant leadership and community spirit. He described "a trickle-down effect [in which] it's like, 'tell me where you are on the journey, tell me what we can do to help, tell me what you need to do

differently, and we might be able to help you in that'" (UR Administrator A, S. P.), with stakeholders being available to assist wherever it's needed for the good of the order, as it were.

More broadly, the willingness to put one's community as least as high as one's individual needs at all levels of Rwandan society was a strong emphasis in many of my conversations with interviewees. The aforementioned young man working in social justice advocacy offered me the example of *umuganda*, the Saturday mornings in which all able-bodied Rwandan adults gather monthly for community service and beautification, described the ritual as one in which

> they take responsibility; people feel proud to do things, even without any force or sensitization. . . . We just go there and there is no pressure. . . . There is no force in doing so many things you see on the ground. Really, because of our past, people are like, "you guys, we've had too much time wasted! I think it's time now we go ahead and build this nation." (CSO Leader F, S. P.)

He lamented the fact that in other countries, particularly in the West, they tend to assume such unusual buy-in at this high level must mean people are compelled by fear or consequences, because they cannot imagine such a scenario playing out that way in their own countries.

One UR faculty member and administrator with whom I met discussed this situation with me at length, particularly how extraordinarily safe Kigali feels, even for a woman like myself travelling alone as a foreigner, and how incredulous people are about that phenomenon. He was appreciative that I had come to that conclusion, and further asserted

> that is what is being inculcated in every individual, whether at the University, local level, wherever. Yes, at the University, we make it more formal, because we know those who are graduating here are the ones who are going out there to design how to bring it down to the local population, but each and every one—University students or faculty—each one of us has a duty, has an obligation to accomplish that. (UR Administrator D, S. P.)

Indeed, I shared my observations with many interviewees of how safe Rwanda (or at least Kigali) feels but said that I wondered if it was the same for local people as it was for me as a foreigner. One CCM faculty member and administrator with whom I discussed this conundrum proudly responded that "yeah, seriously, even as a young boy that's what we were being told:

'you have to respect your visitors, even if you don't know him or her.' I have to tell you that things have been changing really positively" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.).

I responded to such interviewees that kindness to strangers and courtesy to visitors was one thing, but I wondered if my Rwandan study participants agreed that such a collective ownership of the need for peacebuilding was similarly widespread. The answer was a resounding yes; one civil society leader in this arena, when I asked her if there has been resistance to the mainstreaming of peace education in K12 schools, responded emphatically with a laugh that "we learnt the hard way! When you talk about peace, Rwandans tend to understand the language. They tend to understand the language, because they have experienced the lack of it" (CSO Leader D, S. P.).

This conclusion was echoed by a high-ranking UR administrator, who explained to me

> We think that we, more than anybody else around the world, need first to think of what peace is and why we need peace, because we have experienced the worst of tragedies. . . . So, you will find that besides [us at] the University, even local people are doing that, trying to build that peace. (UR Administrator D, S. P.)

Another official in a genocide prevention-focused Government agency who teaches in CCM corroborated this phenomenon and went a step further to say that not only does committed leadership trickle down to ordinary people working for peace, but also that the converse is true: that the deep investment of citizens trickles up and manifests in thriving, robust governance structures. Specifically, he claimed that "what's special about Rwanda that's very important for civilized countries is that there are strong institutions. . . . When there are strong, strong institutions, then the conflict can't be transformed into war or killings" (CCM Faculty A, S. P.).

Indeed, innumerable stories and anecdotes my participants shared with me reflected this growing trust in Rwandan institutions as protectors of society's peace and stability, so much so

that many foreign NGOs are beginning to phase out their work in Rwanda because it is increasingly stable enough and with sufficient momentum as to be autonomous in the work of peacebuilding and development. Overwhelmingly, study participants concluded that the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation has been and will continue to be a meaningful contributor to such a positive outcome.

Culminating Summary

The narrative of this chapter has presented trends from 30 participant interviews, including responses to all three research questions, and thus addresses the impact, implementation of insights of the UR's M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program. Overall, the findings tell the following story.

A Story of Impact . . .

Stakeholders in the M.A. program shared their perspective that the experience is meant to develop such leaders by including students with an equal valuation of theory and practice, along with a deep understanding of structural violence as a driver of conflict.

The program also nurtures their skills in social justice advocacy and community engagement by enlarging their sense of ethical responsibility to others, and by emphasizing the importance of critical thinking.

They envision the program as producing alumnae who embody the 10 UR Graduate Attributes, but even more so, as a catalyst for their personal transformation as peace leaders.

. . . A Story of Implementation . . .

The logistics of the program's design were informed by the expansion of CCM's mandate from the production of knowledge to the dissemination of knowledge. Such growth required

partnership with both UR entities and with foreign partners, SIDA in particular, but stakeholders agree that although the M.A. program has borrowed best practices, its content has remained grounded in local context.

The M.A. program invites small cohorts of working adults with significant professional experience and is designed as such. However, unlike its sister CCM programs in Genocide Prevention and Security Studies, is not fully funded, which means that there are indeed socioeconomic limitations on who can reasonably participate. Similarly, although there is gender parity in the student body of the program, there remains a significant dearth of female representation in either the faculty or the administration.

From the student side, the M.A. program welcomes differences of opinion, with faculty members who embrace being facilitators of learning by respecting the expertise students bring to discussions. On the faculty and administration side, it was difficult to gauge how conflict is handled, due in part to a complex hierarchical organizational structure in CCM and the UR at large, as well as a distaste for public complaint in Rwandan culture.

. . . A Story of Insights

Alumnae from the M.A. program enthusiastically asserted that they were satisfied with their growth from participating, while UR faculty members and staff—both in and outside of CCM—expressed great pride in the accomplishments of the program thus far as an incubator of leadership, and those working in peacebuilding outside the UR similarly exhibited strong admiration for its goals and its achievements.

Despite such high praise, stakeholders offered numerous suggestions for how the program might be improved, the most frequent of which were all geared towards sustainability of

the program. These recommendations included increasing financial and logistical accessibility for students, creating deeper partnerships with relevant organizations, emphasizing psychosocial well-being in both content and support structures, and investing in completion of more Rwandan Ph.D.s and broader publication opportunities.

The most oft-repeated lesson was that peace is a journey that requires continual investment and self-reflection, both of which are embodied in Rwandan ownership of both the M.A. program and their country's progress.

Subsequent Recommendations and Reflections

Chapter 5 will discuss connections between the aforementioned outcomes and existing literature, significance of this study, alongside its inherent limitations, and my suggestions for future research that would build upon this investigation. Equally important, I will outline three complex recommendations based on the findings, specifically embracing constructive criticism as nurturing rather than threatening, increasing autonomy and process transparency in order to limit bureaucracy, and diversifying sources of both funding and partnerships.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter, I first present a brief explication of the key findings of the study in conversation with the discourse and my own researcher reflections. The analysis of collected research data and concurrent document review yielded twelve relevant study findings on the impact, implementation and insights of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program at the University of Rwanda.

Relatedly, I discuss the limitations to generalizability that were inherent in this study, both structural and internal, followed by an exploration of future research topics that may warrant investigation and directions for research that show promise.

Finally, I offer three overarching recommendations for policy and practice for both CCM and the UR, and also the fields of peace education and educational leadership at large. These recommendations are grounded in the perspectives of my study participants and are each aligned with one of the groupings, each of which includes one of the research questions and corresponding discourse themes, three interview question clusters, and any subsequent findings that came out of examining each question, as described in further detail below.

In support of the recommendations I have laid out, I close with a detailed description of follow-up steps and actions I commit to taking as a practitioner and academic towards the realization of these goals.

In the spirit of decolonizing methodology (and somewhat in opposition to the traditional structure of closing dissertation chapters), where appropriate I continue to support my own observations and conclusions with direct quotes from my participants. This choice stems from

my continued intention to ground anything I have to say in their perspectives as the real experts on their program and their country.

Interpretation of Key Findings in Conversation with Discourse

The following section summarizes the twelve primary findings that emerged from this study, organized by each of the three groupings of research questions (each of which has been aligned with one of three discourse themes and related interview question clusters). These findings were presented in Chapter 4 with supporting details from participant interviews; however, this section will seek to extend those findings by situating them within the existing scholarly conversation and by offering my analysis of their significance as the investigator, along with my personal reactions and reflections, in keeping with the decolonizing methodology that drove my ethos for this study.

Grouping 1 (IMPACT): RQ1—DT1—IQ7-12

The first three findings fall under this grouping and address both the intended and actual impact of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation Program.

1. The M.A. program seek to inculcate students with certain themes, values, and skills, including an **equal valuation of theory and practice** along with a deep **understanding of structural violence** as a driver of conflict.

Finding 1: Connections to discourse. This particular theme in the Master program speaks directly to the conceptual framework of this study, namely that structural violence is at the root of all conflict, as supported by a multitude of peace education scholars. The centrality of structural violence to understanding and addressing conflict constructively has been highlighted as early as Galtung's (1969) work, which first named the phenomenon, and throughout the half-century since, with contemporary scholars such as Falcón (2016) agreeing that it is the

sometimes subtle, but always multifaceted social structures that underlie inequities and the continued reproduction of privilege. In this way, the first finding advances dialogue on the subject of structural violence, particularly how leaders in a postconflict country contend with the topic a generation after "hot" violence has ceased.

Finding 1: Researcher reflections. One of the observations I made in Rwanda that illustrates how deeply this first finding affects the content and operations of the M.A. program was in how CCM treats publications. As we have already established, there is a definite Western hegemony in academia, certainly including the standards by which scholarly circles judge publications and journals as "worthwhile". These judgments, when applied without circumspection, have direct effects on developing world scholars, such as their chances for promotion within the academic ranks. However, in Rwanda, despite the push for more prolific and high-quality publications, CCM in particular nonetheless privileges the impact of publications, regardless of the source.

For example, one professor described to me how proud he was of a former student whose article had been purposely been made available on open source platforms (rather than limited to a peer-review journal) and has been downloaded over 300 times by Rwandan users; this professor made the case that, although rigor and status are important, impact matters even more.

In this way, CCM has embodied the ethos of the first finding by valuing theory, but not in a way that eclipses practice, and by countering the structural violence of academic norms by encouraging Rwandan scholars to ensure their work has value for local development. There is a genuine appreciation balance between academic and practitioner-oriented work, a phenomenon I

myself found to be true everywhere, in any arena of society I had the opportunity to explore while in Rwanda.

2. The M.A. program nurtures their effectiveness in social justice advocacy and deep community engagement by enlarging their sense of **ethical responsibility to others** and by emphasizing the importance of **critical thinking**.

Finding 2: Connections to discourse. The clear importance study participants placed on these two qualities in M.A. program graduates offers evidence of existing theory discussed in Chapter 2 regarding what liberatory education looks like in practice, in that "all students develop the critical capacities to reflect, critique, and act to transform the conditions under which they live" (Darder, 2012, p. xx). Not one person I interviewed did not touch upon this theme, and M.A. program stakeholders are echoing the broader discourse on peace education by emphasizing development of these traits in students.

While many educational institutions in the West seem to cling to the myth of academic objectivity or education as neutral (notions which Paulo Freire's work debunks both logically and morally), the University of Rwanda, and the M.A. program in particular embrace the counteridea that institutions of higher learning are one of the most important settings for consideration of one's duty to other people, in the community, the country and the world.

Finding 2: Researcher reflections. As I suspected, this study has yielded significant and detailed findings of how peace education can be enacted in formal education settings a full generation after conflict has officially ended. The ways in which CCM stakeholders navigate their own narrative of peace and reconciliation and what they espouse as values necessary to sustaining peace are instructive for anyone interested in peace education or even educational leadership more broadly, because apart from this study, there remain very few detailed

descriptions of how developing country programs actually do this work and what they hope to accomplish by doing so.

Furthermore, already having a college degree, much less a master's or a Ph.D., means that all stakeholders in the M.A. program are unusual in Rwandan society, and to a degree, part of the intellectual "elite". However, those with whom I spoke certainly did not act as though their lives or professional trajectories mattered more than those of anyone else; on the contrary, every participant expressed a sincere and deeply rooted desire to use their privilege as a public servant and peacemaker.

On the subject of critical thinking, I noticed that many study participants alluded to the need for a systemwide protocol for the incorporation of critical thinking as a curricular and pedagogical priority. Admittedly, this priority may be seen as more aspirational than fully realized in the execution of the M.A. program, yet it clearly remains a target stakeholders are aiming for (see Appendix F, Story #15). For example, one civil society leader who was once both a faculty member and administrator at the UR struck me as particularly adept at modeling critical thinking in peace leadership.

Specifically, his comments demonstrated relentless willingness to ask the hard questions about systems and structures, yet he remained clearly devoted to both his role and his organization. Yet this perception was hardly mine alone—in only one year of service there, he had already experienced great success in activating a more sustainable partnership base, along with developing peace education-related programs that have flourished.

3. The M.A. program envisions itself as producing alumnae who embody the 10 UR **Graduate Attributes**, but more importantly, acting as a catalyst for **personal transformation** as peace leaders.

Finding 3: Connections to discourse. Both the collection of Graduate Attributes that guide the UR's mission and the CCM goal to encourage inner transformation of students echo the classic educational concept of *praxis*, as explicated by Freire (1993), and also Snauwært's conclusions (2011), which included the idea that even more effective than reforming institutions or reconstructing structures in the interest of external conflict resolution is transformation, which casts the widest net, by not only interrogating all these sources of injustice, but also deeply changes individual motivations and outlooks. Thus, the third finding, when considered alongside these ideas from the field, lends even further evidence to suggest that the M.A. program is engaging in effective, holistic peace education.

Finding 3: Researcher reflections. Indeed, I found the UR was nothing if not organized, at least in the sense of ensuring that any official plan or strategy is aligned with other related policies. Apart from a penchant for order and structure, the UR prioritized such alignment of big-picture goals because doing so facilitates the school's ability to produce adaptable graduates who stood ready to put such skills and attributes to good use in an incredibly wide variety of settings.

An interesting anecdote that comes to mind in support of this third finding was that every time I met an interviewee in a public place, we would run into someone else from the peacebuilding community Admittedly, Kigali is not such a large city, but this phenomenon was underscored by just how frequently study participants would tell me without prompting about collaborative projects with their compatriots in other NGOs, departments of the UR, and the like. In other words, the emphasis on graduating people who can work with others to further peace seemed to be happening. I found Rwanda to be a rich tapestry of interconnected organizations

and individuals who see themselves as part of a greater whole in that they are all working in their sphere of influence to better their country.

Additionally, many participant comments (such as the memorable and eloquent expression of "internal liberation" as a goal of the M.A. program) struck me as especially illuminating because they revealed a courage on the part of faculty members to model transformation by being open about their own stories of change, even if painful, during and after the Genocide. Even administrators reflected this attitude of willingness to change in the face of challenges; I was genuinely inspired by one especially high-level leader's commitment to rigorous self-reflection. To witness this ethos at the highest levels of the UR further underscored that the UR (and CCM) care deeply about providing a transformative experience of education.

Grouping 2 (IMPLEMENTATION): RQ2—DT2—IQ13-20

The next six findings fall under the second grouping and shed light on the implementation of the M.A. program, including its attendant decisions and controversies.

4. The logistics of the M.A. program's design were informed by an **expansion of CCM's mandate** from the production of knowledge to the dissemination of knowledge, but this **evolution required partnership** with both UR entities and foreign institutions.

Finding 4: Connections to discourse. Because CCM was only producing research at first rather than investing in human capacity development, it was a decidedly strategic choice to expand into offering the master's programs, not least because producing new Rwandan scholars continually ensures a sustainable cycle of impact. In so doing, CCM exemplified the admonitions of Vanner (2015) and other critical theory and decolonizing methodology scholar advocates, who asserted that "it is essential to contribute to the empowerment of those disadvantaged by the same systems that have advantaged [us]" (p. 2). Rwandan scholars and administrators after the

Genocide were well aware of the dearth of academic skills locally, which made the launch of the graduate offerings not only tactically shrewd, but also a concrete act of counteracting structures of power and privilege by ensuring a greater number of Rwandan peace leaders are ready for their roles.

Finding 4: Researcher reflections. As bureaucratic as Rwanda is, this fourth finding hints at a paradoxical truth I observed: that many systems in the country are nonetheless deeply integrated. Specifically, I found that one simply cannot talk about the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation in a vacuum—it is inextricably enmeshed with the work of CCM as a whole, including the other M.A. programs, the Ph.D. and post-doctorate initiatives, and the newer University-wide Transformative Citizenship module. This interconnectedness was so apparent that it almost felt clunky and forced to attempt to draw conclusions about the program on its own, without also including these other facets of the Centre's work.

Furthermore, the phenomenon of M.A. program priorities changing alongside Rwanda's stabilization process struck me as a demonstration of the movement up Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943), at an institutional level. Whereas at first, Rwanda (and CCM) could only consider survival and how to understand the impossibly dangerous mass violence that had occurred, over time both the country and CCM were able to consider more nuanced needs and issues that come to the fore in countries that are safer, but still exhibiting development challenges.

5. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (**SIDA**) has been the program's most significant partner; however, M.A. program leaders have embraced the borrowing of best practices, while remaining **grounded in local realities**.

Finding 5: Connections to discourse. Partnerships like the UR-Sweden program were rare for the balance they successfully strike between openness to outside ideas and maintaining local autonomy. The unfolding of this partnership offered intriguing nuance to theory set forth by educational leadership scholars like Jean-Marie and Normore, who stressed the importance of cross-border relationships for the sake of resolving problems that are not limited to one's own community. CCM has elegantly managed to embrace symbiotic partnership, especially with SIDA, in order to "generate cross-fertilizations of ideas and experiences" (Jean-Marie & Normore, 2010, p. 24-25), but while also avoiding what classic scholar of privilege Peggy McIntosh (1992) calls "conferred dominance" (p. 34). In short, CCM remained at the helm of their own programs, with such humility to listen to input from trusted colleagues that can only come from confidence in one's own vision.

Finding 5: Researcher reflections. As I noted in Chapter 4, the verbiage on SIDA's mission page (SIDA, 2017) and on the UR-Sweden information page (UR, 2018c) implied that from the beginning, the goal of any partnership between SIDA and CCM was to expand upon and support Rwandan content about their own context. In the development of the program, the execution of courses, and the oversight of program activities, support from SIDA and others has ignited what is ultimately a uniquely Rwandan academic endeavor.

The only pitfall I wondered about regarding this finding was the issue of whether CCM's heavy continued emphasis on their own local context may be seen as a deterrent to the international students many program leaders reported they want to recruit. After all, although the Rwandan experience of conflict and reconciliation is indeed rich and fascinating, students at a

master's level or higher will understandably want to feel confident that they will be able to apply what they learn from the program in their own context.

If they find that the overwhelming majority of examples used in courses or theses are from the Rwandan context only, they may find reason to doubt the generalized applicability of the M.A. program to their own peacebuilding work. Even one high-level UR administrator now working in civil society explained that when he taught classes at one time with students from Burundi and the DRC, he felt it was incumbent on him to adapt the material to ensure they also felt their conflict situations were addressed (UR Administrator H, S. P.).

I do not presume to know whether this potential downside should take precedence over the high value Rwandan program stakeholders place on emphasizing their own story, but simply mention it here as food for thought to decision makers as they consider the way forward for CCM and the tradeoffs that will be inherent in its expansion.

I will mention that this dilemma is one that even my own doctoral program has faced, as it evolved in a parallel way as the M.A. program in Rwanda, with an expansion of focus from only Los Angeles-focused educational leaders to students from all over the United States and finally to students working in global education contexts. This change over time, of course, has also necessitated adapting content accordingly so that it remains relevant to all students participating in the program.

6. Since its inception, the M.A. program has invited **small cohorts of working adults** with significant experience and is designed to be **modular and part-time** to accommodate their participation.

Finding 6: Connections to discourse. The rationale behind recruitment of adult students with a history of working in the field was supported, whether consciously or unconsciously, by scholars of power structures such as Smith (2013), Vanner (2015), and even Foucault (1980), in

the sense that addressing inequities is most effective when a society comprehensively does so in all arenas where power dynamics are being played out. As discussed in Chapter 4, M.A. students were automatically coming from positions of relative academic privilege because they were situated in a context where having higher education at all was still unusual. Additionally, they were exercising power in their respective institutions and organizations, which means that investing in their growth as students and professionals allowed CCM to influence those entities' power structures through them.

Finding 6: Researcher reflections. Multiple study participants left me with the impression that Rwanda, like many developing countries, tended to be chronically underestimated. I relate this observation to the sixth finding because the goals and vision that drove CCM to target such a wide variety of working Rwandan professionals were lofty and brave. Even in domestic educational leadership circles, there were debates as to whether it was better to set very high expectations and thus work all the harder to meet them even if it proved difficult, versus to set goals that were less intimidating and more readily achievable.

By attempting to influence students from such diverse walks of life and professional interest, CCM was embracing the former. Based on the scheduling choices, it seemed to me that over the course of the two-year program, the expectation was that students would be practitioners first and academics second, but to be rigorous in both arenas.

In fact, even the highest-ranking administrator in my study agreed that the UR is attempting to reach high ideals. When we touched upon how ambitious the University's goals have been and continue to be, he admitted the UR has gotten pushback from people wondering why they would take that tack in a resource-constrained environment yet proudly reported that

"it's because Rwanda does things differently—it often does things better" (UR Administrator A, S. P.). I agree wholeheartedly with this assessment.

7. The M.A. program has transitioned from gearing recruitment efforts towards only an initially limited number of institutions to later **offering an open call** to attract a broader target student body and has similarly gone from having primarily foreign professors to hiring **mostly Rwandan faculty** members.

Finding 7: Connections to discourse. CCM and M.A. program stakeholders were forward-thinking enough to realize that relying on foreign partners to breathe life into the program indefinitely was not going to work. Instead, they acknowledged early on that, as Falcón (2016) has argued, it is critically important to strive to the building of collaborative structures that undermine that institutionalized privilege, the key word being "collaborative".

In the CCM context, this goal translated to a welcoming of outside input from trusted partners, but front-facing local leadership. The same principle could be applied to the choice to widen recruitment beyond the initial few organizations; CCM seemed to realize collectively that their impact on peace and social justice would be amplified with a wider network.

Finding 7: Researcher reflections. I feel empathy for CCM as they attempted to walk the tightrope of encouraging Rwandan ownership of programs while also not unduly burdening existing human resources. For the moment, finding this balance may have proven near impossible because there was not yet the requisite number of qualified faculty members who could be made full-time professors with tenure. Participants confirmed that the long-term goal for the UR was to have more full-time faculty members than part-time teaching staff, but for that moment, the realization of that aim may have proven elusive.

When the drive to replace expat lecturers with Rwandan faculty members happened too quickly, as with the M.A. program, the quality of the student experience suffered, to which

my alumnae interviewees have attested. Deciding upon an appropriate pace for phasing out such outside assistance is a complex, unenviable task, but one which the UR and CCM continue to face as they expand.

8. As far as inequities, the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation offers **no subsidization of student tuition**, which means there are necessarily **socioeconomic limitations** to who can realistically participate. Similarly, although the M.A. program has close to **gender parity among the students**, there remains a **mostly male staff** among both CCM and UR faculty members and administrators.

Finding 8: Connections to discourse. The high comparative investment of the Rwandan Government in its public higher education system is aligned with the best practices offered by scholars like Saint (2009), who argued that these expenditures can be rationalized as strategic spending on human capital that ultimately enhances national productivity and economic vitality. However, the socioeconomic and gendered disparities in the M.A. program and the UR at large echoed the findings of many higher education scholars as well, such as Randell (2013), who particularly emphasized the dearth of female academic leaders among faculty members and administrators.

Finding 8: Researcher reflections. Rwanda is an especially perplexing example of gender inequities because unlike many countries, including the United States, girls actually do not outperform boys at the earlier levels of schooling. However, they do graduate high school at equal rates, and it is only from there that the gap began to widen. The disproportionate responsibilities that women carry for family life may indeed cause some female students to self-select out of higher education opportunities or leadership options that would otherwise be open to them, but from an empirical standpoint, this hypothesis remained unconfirmed.

In fact, my dissertation chair heard from her own study participants that someone had recently investigated gender disparities throughout the Rwandan educational pipeline but

remained perplexed about why roughly 50% of graduating secondary school students were female, but the incoming ratio of females at Rwandan universities was not similarly about half of the student body. This statistic struck me as appalling given Rwanda's progress on gender parity on so many other fronts.

Luckily, I observed that there are a multitude of programs aimed at narrowing this gap, including single-gender institutions like the Akilah Institute for Women, initiatives that work with families through organizations like Aegis Trust to gently but continually transform the messaging girls get about what kinds of futures they might consider, and of course, affirmative action initiatives in both education and politics.

However, there was a marked difference between public ventures and private attitudes. Many with whom I spoke acknowledged that most Rwandans would not yet be ready to accept a woman president, despite having a higher ratio of females in their Parliament than any other country (Thornton, 2019). What this seeming discrepancy implies to me is that, not unlike the legalization of non-heterosexual marriage in the United States, sometimes laws and policies are more aspirational than reflective of unanimous public opinion.

As compared to the political arena, Rwandan academia also seems to have ongoing challenges when it comes to gender parity. For example, when my advisor was in Rwanda conducting a concurrent study which examined issues more directly connected to gender, she got confirmation from three different high-level interviewees that the UR had only one female tenured professor across all of its campuses nationwide., yet the disparity in female faculty members and administrators was confirmed by many of my own study participants.

Even so, there are some logistical factors within the control of the UR that emerged from conversations with these interviewees. For example, although female staff represented only about a quarter of the overall cadre of faculty members and administrators at the time of my field work (UR, 2018a), in the interest of gender equity, there is expected to be an equal female presence on every University committee. In practice, the rule meant that although they may be only 25% of the UR staff, they are equipped to perform 50% of the administrative service, thus placing an unfairly onerous burden on female academics.

9. In dealing with students, the M.A. program encourages differences of opinion via faculty members who embrace being **facilitators (rather than transmitters) of learning** and respect the expertise of students. Among program staff, it is difficult to gauge how conflict resolution is handled, due to an extremely **complex and hierarchical organizational structure**, and widespread **distaste for public complaint** in Rwandan culture generally.

Finding 9: Connections to discourse. There is a wealth of peace education literature that echoed the Rwandan ethos towards teaching and learning in the ninth finding. As early as Dewey (1923), there were admonitions on the part of scholars to ensure that teachers did not simply feed ideas to passive classrooms, but instead acted humbly as "members of the community to select the influences" (p. 6), which would be curated and offered to students as critical thinkers.

Such a model of classroom interaction was claimed by innumerable theorists to be the decisive measure in reducing class reproduction through educational structures (e.g., Anyon, 1980; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Hantzopoulos, 2011; Oakes, 1986). As Bell (2007) has argued, in this way, M.A. program faculty members were valuing "social justice as both a process and a goal" (p. 1), and are engaging not just in peace education, but also constructivist education (Harris & Graham, 1994; Lavadenz & Martin, 1996; Poplin, 1988; Vygotskii, 1978).

Being facilitators in the classroom actually exemplifies the definition adopted in Chapter 1 and 2 of this study for peace education itself, offered by Fountain (1999), who suggested that peace educators ideally use teaching and learning methods that promote participation, cooperation, problem solving and respect for differences. However, the comparatively nebulous situation among faculty members and administrators regarding conflict resolution and differences of opinion suggests there may still be room for integration of these principles into CCM operations.

Finding 9: Researcher reflections. The empowerment that study participants reported as the outcome of "facilitating" faculty members seems to me to be directly connected to effective leadership development. It will be precisely these sorts of practices that counteract the refrain I heard among participants that ordinary Rwandans at least seem to believe that in Kagame's absence, genocide would happen again tomorrow.

Although classroom dynamics in the M.A. program struck me as largely egalitarian, the topic of how controversies and conflicts were handled at the faculty or administrative level proved to be an issue about which I had considerably more difficulty soliciting candid responses. On the contrary, most feedback on this subject was at best subtle and obtuse, often with conflicting details being offered to me.

I observed that part of the reason for this trend may have been the extremely complex and hierarchical organizational structure that governs both CCM and the UR at large. For example, although the Program Coordinator and others told me that CCM has monthly meetings in which the faculty members and administrators were invited to come together to assess progress on various measures impacting the programs (CCM Faculty E, S. P.), still other study participants

insisted that they as faculty members had not been invited or even made aware of such meetings, and that even then, their occurrence was perhaps quarterly rather than monthly.

Regarding the complex structure of the UR and how it may complicate progress, I noted in Chapter 4 the detrimental effect of seemingly small but pervasive issues such as a lack of reliable access to professional email. In lieu of hard copies for announcements, reliable email access is critical. Many problems needing resolution for progress and innovation to thrive seem often to get lost in the shuffle when the organizational structure remains unclear for communicating such problems and getting them resolved.

Grouping 3 (INSIGHTS): RQ3—DT3—IQ21-24

The final three findings deal with insights the fields of peace education and educational leadership can glean from the M.A. program.

10. Regarding perceptions of M.A. program success, **alumnae expressed strong satisfaction** with their experiences, with only a few caveats, while faculty members and administrators from **CCM demonstrated great pride** in the program's accomplishments, only noting the strong need for more rigorous self-evaluation, and those **outside of CCM offered admiration** for program goals and achievements in influencing Rwandan peacebuilding.

Finding 10: Connections to discourse. It spoke highly of the M.A. program for its stakeholders to have reported these kinds of positive feelings about the program, even from the standpoint of peace education literature. If indeed, social justice is meant to be focused on the expansion of human agency and choices (Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 2009; Snauwært, 2011), the reactions of these participants about what the program had achieved could be deemed successful, in that it had served students well, accomplished its aims, yet remained open to changing its decision making in the future. Celebrating and encouraging such agency was an integral part of peace and social justice, according to these and other scholars.

Finding 10: Researcher reflections. I felt grateful to have had the privilege of gathering participant assessments of the M.A. program's efficacy for many reasons, not least because it is a singularly unique example of a program whose development has been driven by nationally articulated values. Thus, in some ways, the clear alignment of the M.A. program's goals with Rwandan aims as a whole allowed for possible extrapolation of this finding beyond stakeholder satisfaction with the program to their buy-in to Rwanda's priorities themselves.

At the same time, as I hope I have communicated, a repeating theme I heard in Rwanda, even from non-interviewees with whom I spent time, was that answers to virtually any question one has about Rwanda are invariably more complicated than they may seem. Certainly, this sentiment was echoed in the multifaceted responses of each category of participants in their assessment of program success; no one unequivocally praised the program, but instead demonstrated nuanced circumspection by recognizing where there is still room to grow.

11. Stakeholders in the M.A. program offered numerous **suggestions for improvement, primarily focused on program sustainability** that tended to fall under **four main themes**: 1) Increase program accessibility to students, financially and logistically, 2) Create deeper partnerships with relevant organizations, 3) Emphasize psychosocial well-being in both content and support structures, and 4) Expand investment in completion of Rwandan Ph.D.s, post-docs, and high-quality publications.

Finding 11: Connections to discourse. According to the discourse on peace education, the suggestion from study participants to emphasize psychosocial well-being was particularly incisive and wise; even the aforementioned definition of peace education this study has adopted from Fountain (1999) suggested that facilitators would do well to foster a climate that models peaceful and rights-respectful behavior in relationships between all members of the school community, which includes the supports necessary to create such an environment.

Meanwhile, the recommendations to expand access to this rigorous program, perhaps with partnership support, and to further invest in Rwandan terminal degree holders and

publishing opportunities is in keeping with recommendations from scholars such as Smith (2013) and Falcón (2016), to name a few, who made a case for academic environments that counter the hegemony of Western voices in those circles and in knowledge production generally.

As to the suggested expansion of investment in Rwandan scholarship, it came to my attention over the course of completing this study that the UR officially announced in conjunction with the launch of its 2015 Genocide Commemoration that it aimed to increase the proportion of doctoral degree holders among its academic staff from 20% to 60% by 2024 (Rugira, 2015).

Finding 11: Researcher reflections. It occurs to me that the participant recommendation to further develop partnerships between CCM and related organizations could easily be a natural outgrowth of what alumnae have been doing informally on their own for years. Each of the four alumnae I met reported having close working relationships with fellow graduates from the program in other organizations; such collaboration seemed to have come naturally for them as individuals, and thus CCM might only have to harness this existing momentum towards partnerships and institutionalize it further.

On the subject of psychosocial well-being, it was easy for me to accept the urgency of providing for this priority after observing Rwanda even for six weeks. I still recall poignantly being at the Kigali Genocide Memorial and reading one survivor's testimony that even decades later, they felt plagued by loneliness because they are left feeling they cannot trust anyone, not even those they call friends, family or neighbors. And sadly, I heard echoes of this kind of pain from people I talked to, albeit subtly hinted at between hopeful commentary.

For students in particular, who felt that their emotional needs were not supported, I recall feeling especially sympathetic hearing both that no one responded when they were in trouble and that they had concluded that their struggles must not much matter in the grand scheme, as though these students' suffering was inconsequential just because they live in a society where nearly everyone has experienced trauma. I remember thinking that one does not negate the other, nor should either be eclipsed. Based on the responses of faculty members and staff on this issue, it seems apparent to me that there is a disconnect between student realities and the official perspective on what supports are available to students.

Finally, on the subject of increased investment in Rwandan scholarship, it may well be that the only way to achieve this goal and address this suggested improvement is to launch a Ph.D. locally, since clearly not all interested would-be students are able to spend lengthy time away in Sweden. Even a "sandwich" program like the current arrangement for doctoral studies, with some time spent at the UR as well, would likely be too disruptive to the lives of many potential applicants.

12. The M.A. program offers many insights for the fields of peace education and educational leadership; however, the most frequent refrain that ran through most stakeholder discussions was the idea that **peace is a continuous journey** requiring ongoing investment and self-reflection, and that Rwandans embody this idea through strong collective **ownership over programs and progress**.

Finding 12: Connections to discourse. Virtually all of the discourse I have cited in Chapter 2 had this same finding at the heart of its conclusions: that no individual or group has ever "arrived" at peace, that in many ways it is more like a dynamic relationship than a destination. Regarding Rwandan ownership over the processes that build peace and programs like the M.A., even Fountain (1999) in the definition used for peace education in this study insisted that such rooting in the local culture is critical for any sustainable venture.

Finding 12: Researcher reflections. Regarding peace as a continuous journey, I had a particularly thought-provoking discussion with numerous study participants about the double-edged sword of how idealistic this field can be. On the one hand, it strives for high ideals, but on the other, there can be a perfectionistic paralysis and inaction in the absence of an "ideal" solution. Amazingly, Rwanda has succeeded in not only embracing its own locally grounded solutions to postconflict problems but has also demonstrated the value in implementing "flawed" solutions anyway and simply being open to continuous improvement along the way.

I frequently marveled at the gracious humility that allows Rwandans to acknowledge progress without taking it for granted. Obviously, Rwanda is in a rare position to deeply internalize this ethos as a country that experienced such swift and widespread brutality yet has also maintained peace and stability for a full generation. But even in cases where peacebuilding efforts are not yet going perfectly, I think Rwanda has been very wise—and its attitude is something the United States and many other countries can learn from—in that they take to heart the adage that says "the perfect is the enemy of the good."

On the subject of ownership over progress, Rwanda is nothing if not anomalous; in the past, the speed of spreading violence and the totality of participation among ordinary people was unprecedented, yet today, the degree to which ordinary citizens embrace their part in keeping society peaceful is similarly unusual. The Rwandans I met seem to not only embrace peacebuilding as a personal—perhaps even a national—calling, but they have on countless occasions forged their own path to doing so and resisted paternalistic prescriptions for peace.

Instead, they have taken on increasingly autonomous roles and turned to solutions deeply rooted in their own culture, history, and robust social networks. This trend is to my mind part of

what makes the lessons offered by both the M.A. program and Rwanda in general so poignant and powerful.

Two of the clearest examples of study participants expressing a sense of personal mission when it comes to peacebuilding were also among the youngest of my interviewees, which offered evidence to me of a generational shift in the Rwandan mindset; for someone under 30 to speak about their career path in such a clear and focused manner, with an emphasis on public service, struck me as especially promising.

Similarly, I experienced the proactive spirit of Rwandans about exemplifying the community they want to build when the scooter I rented in Kigali persistently broke down. When this problem occurred, multiple times moto taxi drivers would stop to try to help me get it started or offer me their phone, or how if I was lost in Kigali's hilly winding streets, passersby would offer to have me follow them to my destination even it was out of their way. I shared my conclusion with study participants that this reaction happened so stunningly often that it was almost as though Rwandans saw themselves as citizen ambassadors.

Indeed, the Rwandan context is singularly unique in terms of what it contends with as a postconflict society, which was a strong driver of my interest in examining a high-level peace studies program there. The more I learned, the more I found myself concerned that perhaps the strong influence of the Government narrative and postgenocide agenda in this unique context would unduly influence CCM's mandate and the program's effectiveness. Yet even this concern was assuaged by my participants, all of whom insisted that the program stands on its own in terms of embracing its vision and values.

External and Internal Limitations to Generalizability

Although this study contributed to research that explored best practices in peace education and educational leadership, particularly those from a developing world context that was normally excluded from the conversation, there were significant limitations to the information this particular investigation provided in terms of applicability to other contexts. These limitations included demographic skews in the sample, no opportunity for class observation, perspectives particular to residents of an urban capital city, and novice research skills amidst unrelenting snags on seven different fronts, which are described below.

Demographic Skews in the Sample

Because my initial goal was to interview about 10 people, but I fortuitously ended up with nearly three times that number, the ultimate ratio of students to staff was a bit low. Furthermore, it is a bit of a misnomer to call them "students", as all four of the individuals I interviewed were actually M.A. program alumnae. Not only that, but all four graduated with the first or second cohorts, meaning that the latest anyone was still matriculated in the program was 2014. Thus, it was entirely possible that my study would have yielded very different results if it had included either most recent program alumnae, or current master's students.

Similarly, I cannot claim that the student perspectives I gathered were representative of M.A. students since the program's inception because all four were female. Admittedly, as Chapter 4 explicated, the M.A. program did tend to skew a bit female, but not to the degree of being single gender. In the same way, the only faculty members and administrators I was able to interview were males, with the only exception being one Western female professor, though her primary affiliation was not with CCM.

In this case, the sample actually was somewhat more representative of the male skewed CCM leadership population, as Chapter 4 has discussed. Nonetheless, it would have been useful to include at least one or two female faculty members or administrators, even if they were designated as clinical, visiting, or reassigned.

No Opportunity for Class Observations

This issue was a difficult one for me to accept, since I really tried to make sure it didn't happen. My original intent when I developed the methodology for this study was to triangulate interviewees and possibly even focus groups with M.A. program classroom observations. Unfortunately, because of numerous delays in getting to the field, my actual arrival coincided with finals week, which ruled out the possibility of visiting classrooms directly. In fact, by the time my research permit was finally approved, grades had been submitted and most current students (and even adjunct faculty members) had left campus for the summer vacation.

This turn of events was actually one key reason I was only able to interview program alumnae, rather than current students. On the bright side, many of my interviewees insisted that had I been able to visit at a different time when classes were still in session, many CCM staff would have been more than willing to have me observe as a visitor, and possibly even act as a guest speaker.

Perspectives Particular to Residents of an Urban Capital City

I knew going into this investigation that my setting would likely be limited to the capital metro area of Kigali, particularly since the M.A. program is hosted there. That being said, the UR had 14 campuses across the country, with only four of those in Kigali, and as recently as five

years before the study was completed, its main campus was located in Butare, the capital of the southern province of Huye.

Regrettably, what I never actually found out with certainty was whether the M.A. program was once situated there also, which would have made the early years of the program a markedly different experience than those of students studying in Kigali, not to mention that the student population they would have been able to draw would have looked quite different since M.A. students have maintained their full-time positions concurrent with their studies since the program's inception.

The other important reason it may have limited the generalizability of this study's conclusions to relegate my work to Kigali was that, according to my participants, the status of peace and reconciliation looked quite different elsewhere in Rwanda, particularly along the borders. One Western health care worker I interviewed who worked in the northern sector of Ruli stressed that she had witnessed far less hope for the future and postconflict healing in that community than in Kigali proper, and speculated that perhaps this difference was due in part to the starkly lower quality of life in such areas (CSO Leader A, S. P.).

Another illustrative example emerged from one phone interview I conducted with a Western civil society peacebuilder who has served extensively for over five years in rural communities. Her illuminating perspective was sobering and worth sharing, despite its only ancillary relation to the research questions guiding this particular study. For example, she shared that in such communities,

> people are living side by side and know the killers but have no way to leave. So, they have no one else to buy soap from and they see that person every day! . . . And now, they feel their life is threatened every time they go to the market. But the police have told them just to drop it. . . . No one will prosecute it; no one will take their case, . . .but those stories only started to come out as people started to trust me a lot more. (CSO Leader E, S. P.)

She went so far as to say she would prefer I not repeat any of the stories she told me in my writing because that's how fragile the trust for outsiders and the ongoing fear of reprisals for sharing discontent remains in the areas where she works.

In fact, the aforementioned dynamics of foreign researcher trust and facility with sensitive topics relates intricately with the next limitation I will discuss.

Novice Field Research Skills Amidst Unrelenting Snags

At the risk of being entirely too self-deprecating, I am confident I can objectively argue that my positionality as a brand-new field researcher had definite, significant impact on the generalizability of this study's findings. Apart from minor issues, such as realizing upon review of my interview recordings that I spoke too quickly for non-native English speakers or simply too much when I felt nervous or intimidated, a number of more serious internal and external issues arose as well, some of which were unavoidable, but others that could be planned for and mitigated in future extensions of this work.

Wide variation in interview length. For example, in an effort to have only loosely semistructured interviews and thereby allow participants to direct the conversation to topics they considered most important, I found that my interviews varied dramatically in both length and content coverage. While some were barely 30 minutes, a handful of others were close to two hours. This wide variation wouldn't necessarily be a problem, except that it may mean that some individuals' responses are inadvertently privileged over others simply because they offered more commentary to choose from.

Unexpectedly overwhelming volume of data. Similarly, I ended up with 30 interviews by the time I left Rwanda (with several more I had to decline simply because time had run out to

conduct them, and a few of which I laid aside for future pieces because our conversations proved to be unrelated to the research questions at hand), which was nearly three times and many as I had been hoping to get.

This problem was admittedly an encouraging one to have, but one which stemmed from my panic at having been delayed from even beginning my research for nearly a month upon arrival in Kigali because of the frustrating and convoluted process of getting my research permit approved. The reason for my panic was that the realization that the pre-arrival assertions of my Rwandan contacts (who insisted getting the approval would be a rubber stamp, easy process) were wholly unfounded and that my permit would not be released until just one day before my original planned departure.

I responded to this discouraging obstacle by extending my time in-country (and thus, my unpaid leave from work, a burden unto itself) by three additional weeks and trying to squeeze any interviews I could into half the time I had planned for. With the compressed timeline weighing on me, I chose to cast a wide net and ask as many people as possible for interviews, just in case many declined or were unavailable. As it turns out, methodological experts such as Creswell (1998) recommend that in studies using grounded theory as a foundation should indeed aim for 15 to 30 interviews, so I may have stumbled into best practice inadvertently by ending with 31 interviews (and later 30 after culling) from which to analyze.

Though a few were unable to meet with me, the vast majority actually accepted my invitation to be interviewed, which leads me to why this outcome was both a blessing and conundrum: after conducting so many interviews (in some cases, as many as five or six per day),

I found myself with an unforeseen glut of data—a 1,600 page tome of interview transcripts that, frankly, I felt ill-equipped to wrangle and reduce "correctly" as a novice researcher.

To be fair, praxis about my tendencies as a leader has revealed to me that this tendency towards "hoarding" of data, whether my own or what I collect as I conduct literature reviews (i.e., gathering 100 articles for a piece that would have required 20 at most), is one I have exhibited for many years and is not unique to this investigation. Again, I attribute this sometimes-self-defeating tendency to my status as a novice researcher who has not yet learned when to say enough is enough, to recognize when the work is "done". This tendency was almost certainly amplified in the course of this particular investigation, given that my dissertation represented the apex of my scholarly achievement thus far, and the goal of telling the story of this M.A. program became so precious to me that it was difficult for me to gauge if my efforts to do at any stage were ever really "enough".

The combination of close to two thousand pages to examine and my emotional attachment to this project ultimately meant that, at the time of this writing, it has been nearly two years since I returned from my field work in Rwanda because that was how long it took me to transcribe, code, reduce, and make sense of my data while working a concurrent full-time job in educational leadership.

(Unnecessary) hesitation to ask about participants' experience of the Genocide. Another important issue I want to bring to light concerning my technical ability in this study was the tentativeness I demonstrated when asking participants about their backgrounds, specifically their Genocide survivor status. Admittedly, despite there being an official Government-sanctioned definition of a survivor, in reality, there are not universally agreed upon criteria.

This ongoing controversy is a topic I will leave for future research to wrestle with; however, for the purposes of this study, I can confidently assert that according to my interviewees, I need not have been so coy in inquiring about their relation to the Genocide. It is actually illegal in Rwanda at this point to ask about ethnic background, certainly in official settings, although Rwandans told me they can tell without asking anyway.

That being said, for most individuals with whom I spoke, simply sharing the stories of what they went through during the Genocide and its impact on them afterwards would have felt perfectly comfortable. In fact, knowing their backgrounds and what they experienced during that time would likely have elucidated their motivations for getting involved in the M.A. program or peacebuilding work generally, along with their current outlooks on peace and reconciliation. In summary, my lack of assertiveness in asking about this represents a missed opportunity.

Even so, the flip side of my oversensitivity to asking about uncomfortable issues was that I believe I succeeded in making participants feel both valued and comfortable in my presence, as evidenced by laughter occurring multiple times in nearly every interview and frequent comments like "I'm actually forgetting you are even interviewing me!" (CSO Leader F, S. P.).

Furthermore, despite more than half of my participants warning me in advance of our meeting about time constraints, the transcripts revealed at least seven instances in which I alerted them to the time and yet had them offer to stay longer because they wanted to continue talking. In virtually all of my interviews, I found respondents were willing to give me more time than I had anticipated, and I hope this trend was at least in part due to the warm, safe atmosphere I facilitated between us.

Confusion about how to interpret outliers in participant perspectives. The ethical gray area with which I wrestled the most was how deeply to engage with seeming contradictions in what I was hearing from interviewees, specifically on sensitive topics like opinions of the current administration or whether ordinary people are safe from reprisals for expressing dissent. Without getting into too much detail, since such stories were not directly relevant to the questions in this study, suffice it to say that a handful of the individuals with whom I spoke seemed to feel genuine fear towards President Kagame and the political apparatus in power currently, as compared to others who spoke in glowing terms of what he and his team had done for Rwanda.

Whether these dynamics created an undercurrent that muddied the waters of my participant responses or made them less candid, I cannot say with certainty; however, even the most vocal participant on these issues insisted that CCM was not a place whose impact, implementation or insights for the field had been stifled by an overexertion of government control, and promised that he would have told me if he had thought otherwise.

In a particular candid interview with one Western researcher who has spent significantly more time in-country than I, she offered some advice that may prove useful to scholars seeking to extend the work of this study in the future. She recommended

> I don't really care if they're telling the truth. What I'm more interested in is *why* are they choosing to tell me that story, at that moment in time, based on their past experiences, current situation, etc. . . . If someone gives me a completely party line interview, which happens, I want to know who are they and why did they choose to [do so]? . . . Our data is tempered by the sociopolitical and historical situation. And so, for me, what I'm looking for is a lot richer and deeper in the interviews than the words on the page of the transcript. . . . So, we don't talk about truth and accuracy and theory; we talk about candid and authentic. (CSO Leader E, S. P.)

I found this insight to be of enormous value, and although I could not rewind and conduct my interviews again with this wisdom in mind, I attempted to bring that ethos into my synthesis and analysis of the data upon returning to the United States, including in my writing of this piece.

Mental health fragility in the face of extraordinary concurrent life stressors. This subject is actually a bit difficult for me to write about in detail, as it represented an intensely personal aspect of my experience in Rwanda. However, it is out of my commitment to decolonizing methodology and the radical, holistic honesty it entails about one's positionality that I will attempt to recount this part of the story with candor and the hope that doing so may help other researchers.

I knew going into my field work that I was a student who, irrespective of my admittedly impressive accomplishments and abilities, has struggled with and been treated for mental health issues for years. I have done my best throughout my doctoral experience to be proactive about countering the effects of these issues by setting up strong supports (including the invaluable support of having my advisor come to Rwanda in person while I was conducting my research for the last two weeks I was there).

However, the stress and culture shock of being in a new country—alone at first—with an absurdly delayed research permit, combined with the (now) laughable number of other things that went wrong took an undeniable toll on my psyche and my ability to function day to day in Rwanda. I will elaborate on a few of the more notable examples of stressors that may have impeded my effectiveness in the field.

The most important difficulty with which I contended happened the day I left Los Angeles to fly to Rwanda; my mother (who had already been treated for brain cancer) was

hospitalized for what doctors thought was a stroke, and she remained incapacitated and unresponsive to treatment for nearly three quarters of my time in-country. My loved ones insisted I should not cut my trip short and should stay the course, since her illness had already delayed the field work more than once, and since there was little I could have done anyway if I had returned. Her life was supposedly not in imminent danger, but we all remained in limbo as to whether she would ever recover[11].

A more technical snag I experienced was the aforementioned accidental loss of all of my field notes from the first two weeks of my time in-country. Similarly, after the recording device I had been using somehow shut off without saving about 40 minutes into a conversation with an interviewee, I learned my lesson and used a backup recorder for every conversation thereafter.

Apart from my mother's illness and the aforementioned research permit approval delay, another hurdle I encountered that significantly impacted my ability to function in the field was the ongoing breakdown of the scooter I rented. Because my primary mode of transportation in Los Angeles for years had been a scooter, I felt confident that I could handle navigating Kigali on a scooter, even if it was a new city for me, even (as it turned out) without reliable GPS connections. This plan would have worked out fine, except that the scooter I had arranged to rent from an expat broke down and left me stranded at least six times in the first month. In fact, within three days of procuring it, and on the day of my initial presentation to the Ministry of Health Ethics Committee to get my research permit, the key broke off in the ignition and I had to scramble for an emergency ride to this critical meeting.

[11] My mother did ultimately recover somewhat, though she remains significantly diminished. In fact, this project was once again delayed in February 2017 by the urgent necessity of my taking another leave of absence from work, this time for nearly six months, to get my parents out of their house and move them into assisted living.

Finally, after I pushed it home yet again, I realized that I had better change my tactics and return the scooter. However, doing so necessitated the stress of a last-minute change to the lodging I had arranged months earlier as well[12] because the apartment I initially rented was in Kiyovu, a Kigali neighborhood that (unbeknownst to me) was practically impossible to travel to and from without an independent mode of transport. It is the neighborhood where the President's residence is located, along with numerous embassies and Ministries, so there is heightened security, which is deterrent to moto taxis, not to mention steep hills that make it treacherous terrain to cover on foot.

Particularly given my limited time left to catch up and conduct all of my interviews, I realized I needed my home base in Kigali to be somewhere I could easily get from place to place, so I scrambled to find a new rental in a much more central neighborhood called Kimihurura that thankfully turned out to be a perfect fit. Apart from lesser snags that I will refrain from describing here, the home I stayed in for the latter three weeks of my visit was a sanctuary in the chaos. Even so, I could feel the tenuousness of my mental and emotional stability and felt the effects of this inner turmoil in the form of ongoing physical illness throughout my visit, such as digestive distress and severe insomnia (possibly a side effect of the malaria pills).

Nonetheless, I am proud to report that I adapted: I tried to take good self-care by exercising every day at a nearby gym, by maintaining my spiritual routine to have some sense of grounding in the chaos, by meeting with Rwandan and expat friends, and even by treating myself to the occasional massage at the very swanky Kigali Marriott. In fact, I coped with my mom's

[12] If the reader wonders why I did not just stay at a hotel, it is because this unpaid leave from work was entirely self-funded and I could not have afforded to stay at even a modest hotel for six weeks. Using an online rental service proved much more economical for my purposes.

hospitalization constructively by writing her postcards each day to be given as a collection upon my return. Actually, the content of these messages ultimately became part of my field notes!

Discomfort with informed consent and use of name forms among participants. At least five interviewees expressed confusion and distrust when I presented these standard research forms at the culmination of our meetings. After a while, I started mentioning them in passing and allowing them to review and complete the forms at the end, so that they would not detract from the openness of our conversations, but, nonetheless, I found the need to include these forms awkward and challenging in ways I did not expect. People who seemed perfectly at ease with me when we first sat down to talk would visibly tense up and become wary when I brought the forms out, despite my careful explanation that they were actually meant to protect them, not me, and that the forms were not binding them irrevocably to the study but were, in fact, codifying their right to withdraw at any time and to be in control of the process each step of the way.

I got the impression that perhaps the use of such forms was uncommon in Rwandan research settings, which was a troubling finding in and of itself, though not apropos of this study's goals. What I noticed was that, although my participants ultimately agreed to sign the forms, most commented with relieved laughter afterwards that the questions I had asked were nowhere near as scary as the forms had led them to believe they would be. So, the need to use those documents proved a thorny problem in managing how others perceived me and trying to ensure I was a safe and comfortable person with whom to talk.

Lack of leverage in terms of status. Despite having nurtured and maintained email contact with UR contacts for three years preceding my visit, I found that it was harder than anticipated to expand my list of potential interviewees. However, it is entirely possible that I

inadvertently approached interactions like this one with more timidity than necessary and thus contributed to the dynamic being less than fruitful; I am well-aware that I am not immune from the "imposter syndrome" so common in graduate students and indeed, my audio field notes remind me that I reported feeling like an intruder when visiting the offices of the Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellors, warranted or not. Thus, my conclusion years out from this field work is less complaint that I was treated poorly, and more acknowledgement that my comparatively lower status in Rwandan society may have limited my effectiveness in the field.

Future Directions for Research

There are at least three major research themes that have emerged from this study that merit further investigation, on which I already have accumulated data, but which do not directly pertain to answering this study's research questions. The areas not yet fully mined from this study that could yield separate pieces unto themselves include a profile of Rwanda's civil society and private education landscape, a triangulation of these interviews with comprehensive document analysis and quantitative data, and how Rwandan strategies contribute to the debate in peace education about the effectiveness of a dedicated program versus curriculum integration.

Profile of Rwanda's Government Agency, Civil Society, and Private Education Landscapes

Due to only six weeks in-country and less than three weeks to conduct interviews once the research permit was granted, this study did not include interviewees from every relevant organization, and these additional peace leaders would be well worth the investment of time in future research.

Integral contributors to higher education access: Rwanda Governance Board and Rwanda Education Board. For example, one participant from the Higher Education Council (HEC) recommended speaking with officials from the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) which, among other activities, maintained responsibility for "monitoring of service delivery in both public and private institutions [and] preserving, protecting, and promoting the use of home-grown solutions in Rwanda" (RGB, 2017c). Other participants referenced the Development Bank of Rwanda (BRD) as one of the primary sources of student loan funding schemes for students, a service which before 2015 was managed by the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC)'s Rwanda Education Board (REB) (BRD, 2015).

These participants suggested that professionals from either the BRD or the REB might offer unique perspectives on the challenges facing higher education in Rwanda. Future studies involving the work of these organizations and their contributions to peace, stability and national development might consider addressing the perceived effectiveness of the BRD student loan programs, or the actual rates of repayment disaggregated by categories like gender, degree type, and institution.

A case study approach to teaching peace: Green Hills Academy. Although the focus of this study was the public University of Rwanda, there were nonetheless illuminating insights that came out of the conversations I had with other educators. Among those conversations was an inspiring discussion with the Principal of the Upper School at Green Hills Academy, an elite private school in Kigali founded shortly after the Genocide, in part by First Lady Jeannette Kagame. Students range from nursery school to Grade 12 (with optional boarding for Grades 7 through 12) and are educated using the International Baccalaureate (IB) program.

What began as a modest school with only 130 students has exploded in size to 1,600 students from 56 nationalities. Annual fees range between RWF 1,620,000 (U.S. $1,788) for nursery school to RWF 5,670,000 (U.S. $6,257) for Grades 10 through 12 for Rwandan students, with slightly higher rates for non-Rwandan students (Green Hills Academy, 2019a). As the average net salary for locals is only RWF 12,204,032 (U.S. $13,466) (Average Salary Survey, 2019), Green Hills is out of reach for most Rwandans without significant tuition support.

It was not my project to investigate such supports; however, the Principal confirmed that most students attended were indeed privileged, at least relative to the average Rwandan student. Their parents were often high-level leaders in various arenas and, if international students, they often came from families of diplomats, international NGO workers, and the like. In short, it was an extremely cosmopolitan, diverse environment. Part of my interest in speaking with the Principal (apart from our shared alma mater, the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University) stemmed from curiosity about his perspective on the best avenues for promoting sustained peace in Rwanda, as he has been deeply involved there since immediately after the Genocide ended.

He was drawn to the school since its early days because of its emphasis on nurturing "principled lifelong learners [who are] inquisitive and knowledgeable thinker[s], concerned about others, about Rwanda, and about the environment" (Green Hills Academy, 2019b), an ethos which, of course, rang familiar to me as seeking similar goals as the M.A. program, CCM, and the UR at large.

What I found fascinating was the tactical priority revealed by his recruitment as the second-in-command. He admitted that he had initially been asked to become Head of School but

declined, preferring to focus on curricular reforms and innovations. Specifically, he brought to the table an area of passion he has been developing for decades. He eloquently explained that "one of the things I believe in is teaching kids what is going on in the life of the losers in the zipcode lottery" (CSO Leader B, S. P.), which he described as those who through no choice of their own were born into circumstances where their life chances would be limited as a result.

In order to expose young students to such disparities, he told me how he had been designing and improving upon what he called the "Intellectual Outward Bound Case Study Approach to Conflict Resolution", the execution of which he said was a bit like Model UN. It entailed a summary document of 60 to 80 pages about a given thorny geopolitical conflict, which included a history and timeline of the conflict, a glossary of relevant terms (including those in languages foreign to the students), and—most critical—instructions for those role playing the relevant sides in the conflict in what would ultimately become a sort of mock negotiation after some preparation.

He even proudly reported that he had students play the roles with which they said they were most uncomfortable at the outset to get them to expand their empathetic and critical thinking abilities. At Green Hills specifically, he brought in public school students as well, and the students went through the process together, then did related service work together around Kigali and even sometimes video chatted with students in the conflict settings, such as Israel or Palestine. When all was said and done, and the students concluded the negotiation, he had them jointly write a letter of recommendation or position paper about the conflict and he sent it to relevant policymakers, such as Obama or Senator Kerry—and had even received responses back!

We had done these sorts of exercises at Fletcher at the graduate level, so I was impressed at the thought of middle and high school students engaging in similarly complex activities, but he insisted they love it, and take to it right away, that "they've never been able to call the shots like this before" (CSO Leader B, S. P.).

In this way, the Principal was ensuring that students likely to wield a great deal of power in their future learn very early what it meant to take responsibility for that power ethically by stepping into the shoes of other stakeholders. He enthusiastically told me that he had disseminated such case studies for free over the years, to be used in any setting where they might be useful, and that other educators in Rwanda had expressed interest in them. This creative, interactive approach to peace education would make for an incredibly rich longitudinal study, especially with Rwanda having only recently mainstreamed peace education as part of the public K12 curricula.

Participatory action research as formal mainstreamed practice: Never Again Rwanda, Aegis Trust, and Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace. Yet another innovative form of Rwandan peace education to which I was exposed that was not apropos of this study but undeniably warrants closer analysis is the increasingly widespread use of participatory action research (PAR) at the community level in the service of peacebuilding and social justice. Based on my interviews, at least three major NGOs are using PAR in the field with great success. My contact at Never Again Rwanda (NAR) told me about the many dialogues they conduct, particularly at the borders where conflict is still hot or just barely quelled, using a community-based sociotherapy approach to healing combined with PAR to ensure their research documentation there has a definite impact.

Specifically, he explained that "you would hardly conduct successful advocacy to solve problems unless you have evidence [and] that's an added value of our approach" (CSO Leader C, S. P.), that the methodology of PAR which documents community input about concrete problems becomes part of the evidence presented to decision makers in order to push for solutions. He also described how, interestingly, NAR partners with individual researchers from CCM (some of whom I interviewed!) for such PAR projects, and invites them into working groups, in order to draw on their technical expertise for research, but also because, as he said,

> we need a kind of political validation throughout. You know, actually, that's one of the advantages of this approach, because each and every stage is reviewed and approved to such an extent that when you come up with findings, people would hardly reject them, because they have been part of the process. . . . In other words, they own it, and there is a greater chance advocating for recommendations from the research. (CSO Leader C, S. P.)

Based on what I heard about the practice of PAR in the field in Rwanda, I concluded that not only would in-depth examination of such practices yield important insights for peace education at the community level, but also would likely result in new best practices for any researchers seeking to use their findings for impact outside the academic arena.

Similarly, my contacts at Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP) and Aegis Trust were able to report exciting successes with PAR in the field. My IRDP study participant explained that facilitators of such research/advocacy (often with both organizations working jointly, collaboration which I found was extremely common and well-developed in Rwanda) took a three-pronged approach that began with the descriptive, i.e., reaching consensus on the nature of the problem a given community faced and wanted to address, then expanded to the interpretative, i.e., the consequences this problem was causing or would likely cause without intervention, and finally reached the prescriptive or normative stage, where recommendations could be developed as a team (UR Administrator H, S. P.).

Parallel to this process was the approach to how they interacted with communities, going to the grassroots district level where ordinary citizens gathered to brainstorm, then to the sector level where local government and civil society leaders joined the conversation, then finally to the National Forum level, where facilitators were careful to draw in the perspectives gleaned from each of the prior two levels as accurately as possible.

The rationale he offered for this scaling up process was that "one, you reduce the fear; second, you move from the diversified opinions of ordinary people to rationalization of opinion. So, people will say, 'ah, this is not IRDP talking; this is really evidence-based opinions!'" (UR Administrator H, S. P.) This echoes what NAR says in terms of lending credibility to their ultimate findings and policy recommendations, not only because stakeholders at all levels were considered, but because each stage has been meticulously documented. In fact, IRDP and Aegis Trust have both distributed guides or handbooks as nonformal research tools for widespread use in schools or communities.

My contacts at these organizations readily agreed that "the preliminary result from this [has been that] they become peacebuilders themselves; they assess what is breaking down peace, and what are the existing causes of conflict" (UR Administrator H, S. P.). Although such community-based peace education is far better documented at this point in the global scholarly conversation than peace education in formal schooling settings, I found Rwanda to be such an extraordinarily well-developed and nuanced arena for peace education in *all* settings that I feel confident in the useful findings that would result from close observation of participatory action research examples in Rwanda, such as those initiatives described above.

Willingness to fundamentally change in response to failure: Catholic Relief Services. Although I have not discussed it at length in this study, one cannot fully appreciate and understand the Rwandan culture without seeking knowledge of the paramount importance of religion in that culture. Nearly half of Rwandans are Roman Catholic (World Atlas, 2017), and this widespread faith has played a key role in how Rwandans make sense of the world (for better or worse) for over a century. In fact, I have anecdotally heard many Rwandans say that part of allows them to coexist with each other after the Genocide is the belief that the country was collectively possessed, as if by the Devil, and the spell was broken when it ended.

Whatever one may think of this interpretation, it is clear when visiting Rwanda that faith still acts as a cornerstone of the values held by both individuals and communities, which is part of why I was extremely interested to connect with a leader at Catholic Relief Services (CRS). As luck would have it, I was able to talk to two such individuals, both of whom have served with the organization for decades and one of whom is also a veteran faculty member at the UR. Their description of the way CRS has evolved in response to the lessons of the Genocide offers fascinating content for study, not only for peace education, but for innovative organizational leadership in general.

CRS initially began operations in Rwanda in the early 1960s, in order to respond to the initial mass killings that preceded the Genocide in 1959 and which prompted a huge refugee crisis. At that time, their approach was also striving for innovative solutions; as one of my two CRS contacts put it,

> the new thinking was, how can we do better? And really, CRS has been involved in putting more emphasis on social justice. . . . It was not a hard reconstruction, but a soft one. . . . We had no experiences in how to innovate, how to create something contextualized. [So], you cannot cut and paste, you know? We had to contextualize! Even the Social Teaching Program of the Catholic Church, universally speaking, was not immediately applicable. (CCM Faculty F, S. P.)

Thus, CRS has always sought to lead the way in innovative peacebuilding and development in Rwanda. Sadly, even this embrace of self-reflection and critical analysis of strategies was enough to allow CRS and Catholic Church leaders in Rwanda to stem the tide of violence once the Genocide began.

In fact, it was a deep and painful regret of those with whom I spoke that there were even priests and nuns reported to have colluded with *genocidaires* to give victims over to their killers during that period (though, as one of my contacts pointed out, they may have been just as powerless in the face of armed gangs as anyone else, and may not have acted with malicious intent). Nonetheless, my other CRS contact summarized the key organizational takeaway:

> the year of 1994 stayed in the memory of CRS worldwide as an institution. The tragic experience of Rwanda provoked questions that led to fundamental changes at the level of the Agency worldwide. . . . They are the root causes for the revision of the way of designing strategies and execution of projects that are financed by CRS [with] themes like justice, peace, reconciliation, equity, etc., became the key words in CRS across the world including Rwanda and the executive instructions are to include these themes in all activities. (CSO Leader G, S. P.)

Truth be told, in years of working with a variety of NGOs of myriad sizes and with widely diverse missions in multiple countries, I have never encountered an organization that seemed to have internalized lessons from failures quite this deeply. It astounded and humbled me and was further supported by evidence from numerous stories my contacts shared with me of successes in the field after CRS changed its practices postgenocide.

One of my CRS participants explained that one of the sobering realizations in the aftermath was that although individuals may have legitimately been unable to stop the violence, the Church as a whole should have been a more vigilant and guiding conscience for the nation's many faithful, and thus, that CRS needed to get into the business of not just reconciliation but also conflict prevention and transformation.

She cited the ongoing instability in the Great Lakes region in areas like the DRC and Burundi, and the efforts of CRS to engage in practical social cohesion activities, such as the creation of small business cooperatives between women from different ethnic groups, and proudly asserted that there are innumerable examples in which such women have grown to treat one another as sisters and friends, and have since been elected at community level to solve conflicts between couples or families, "so they are really now sparkers, peacemakers, promoters!" (CSO Leader G, S. P.). Such ongoing grassroots initiatives that address the core structural violence at the root of conflict are at the heart of peacebuilding and peace education and I would argue that such efforts, particularly those operating as successfully as CRS programs, are well-deserving of focused research.

Triangulation of Interviews with Document Analysis and Quantitative Data

As I mentioned above, I had so many more interviews to conduct than I anticipated, and with less time than I planned for, that I did not have the sufficient time to do related analysis of supporting documentation. My original plan had been to use other document artifacts that participants might provide to offer context for their programs, initiatives, or organizations. These documents were to include meeting minutes, strategic plans, grant applications and other funding requests, student success data, official recruitment materials, course syllabi, etc.

There are also Government resources that would have been useful to include in artifact analysis. For example, there is a wealth of data collected by the Rwanda Governance Board that would be relevant to analyze and attempt to replicate in independent studies, specifically white paper-style publications that measure satisfaction of the Rwandan populace with various services, such as the Citizen Report Card, the Rwanda Governance Scorecard, the Rwanda

Media Barometer, or the Rwanda Civil Society Development Barometer (RGB, 2017a). Not only could these sources yield fascinating trends in and of themselves, but they could also be useful tools for triangulation with qualitative data about subjective opinions on Rwandan progress.

According to qualitative research scholars, Rossman and Rallis (2013), use of document analysis constitutes an examination of what they call "material culture" and "is relatively unobtrusive and potentially rich in portraying the values and beliefs in a setting or social domain" (p. 198). These documents would have added a rich layer of corroboration to the subjective perspectives of my interviewees, and I hope that future research, whether by myself or other peace education colleagues, will include such comparisons.

Debate Over Dedicated Peace Studies Program Versus Curricular Integration

One of the key debates that I have observed as a thread in peace education discourse for the whole of my 15 years in the field is whether it is ultimately more effective in any given educational setting to create a delineated, funded (some might argue siloed) peace studies program with dedicated faculties or to attempt to infuse the ethos and content of peace studies through the curriculum into all subjects. I have noticed this debate has particular intensity at the university level, but it remains a conundrum at all levels of schooling. There are arguments to be made for both sides and the likeliest answer I have found is that it depends on the context and on what such peace education programming is seeking to achieve in that particular context.

Rwanda offered an extremely insightful setting in furthering the nuances of this debate because my observation of the peace education landscape there was that they as a country were embracing both approaches. Clearly, as evidenced by the existence of structures like the M.A. program that was the focus of this study, formalized programs do exist and are thriving.

However, as recently as the last two years, the nation has also mainstreamed peace education into public K12 curricula, making ample use of civil society organizational supports to do so. This joint initiative between the Rwandan Ministry of Education and NGOs was called the Rwanda Peace Education Program (RPEP) during the first iteration and now that it has entered the second phase of development and expansion, having made some improvements, is referred to as the Education for Sustainable Peace (ESP) program.

Without delving into too much detail here, their solution for how to make such broad integration a sustainable endeavor has been to train two facilitators per school who then become the focal points for ensuring that peace education is, slowly but surely, becoming part of every subject at every level. They also act as advocates for teachers with concerns or struggles. My Aegis Trust contact told me a story, for example, of a high school chemistry teacher who had told her school's facilitator about the difficulty she was having with the process, and this facilitator sought expertise from contacts at Aegis to connect with additional supports for that particular subject matter (CSO Leader D, S. P.).

Not only is the K12 system in Rwanda making strides in peace education, but so is the University of Rwanda! One of the more exciting developments that came out of my conversations with participants was the imminent launch of what the UR is calling the Transformative Citizenship Module. This module would be a kind of short course that all UR students, at every level of undergraduate and graduate programs, would matriculate into at some point during their time as a student. The module will be taught by a broadly interdisciplinary faculty (often by teams), and will focus on educating Rwandan students about the traditions of their country's past that have had and continue to have enormous promise for building and

sustaining peace, with the hope of thereby contributing—one generation out from the Genocide —to offering young leaders a strengths-based outlook on their country.

It is a sad reality that even 25 years after the Genocide, many foreigners especially know almost nothing about Rwanda except that it is a country that experienced one of the worst cases of mass violence in the 20th Century. And yet, as I myself learned during my visit, Rwanda has an incredibly rich history, full of home-grown solutions that have contributed to conflict resolution in communities at every level of leadership for centuries. There is even a Home Grown Solutions Department in the Rwanda Governance Board, which spearheads the funding and regulations of these initiatives nationwide and expands practices that have been practiced unbroken for centuries into legal and political realities.

Such practices include *girinka* (literally translating to *may you have cows* from Kinyarwanda), which has become an early childhood nutrition promotion program, *umuganda* (which roughly translates to *coming together for a common purpose*), which has become a monthly Saturday morning ritual nationwide in which all able-bodied adults participate in community beautification and improvement efforts, and *itorero*, which has been a cultural school for people of all ages to learn about Rwandan tradition for hundreds of years and which this Transformative Citizenship module will seek to honor and formalize at the university level. These are but a few examples, but there are dozens more, such as the *ubudehe* system, referred to in Chapter 4 as a mechanism for addressing complementary student loan funding.

This module struck me as so unique and innovative that I actually spent a great deal of time with many participants discussing it at length. Even those with whom I did not discuss the module directly raised the subject of how best to implement peace education in different

contexts. Unfortunately, for the purposes of this study, which was focused on the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation, the information I collected was related in only an ancillary way, in terms of answering my research questions.

However, the combination of peace education mainstreaming in Rwandan K12 schools and the Transformative Citizenship module at the UR offers an unparalleled opportunity to discover new insights in the same national setting about the debate between having a dedicated program versus folding peace education into all subjects.

Recommendations for Ongoing Policy and Practice

Hopefully, the three overarching suggestions below register as semi-familiar to the reader, as my goal throughout the reporting of this investigation has been to couch any opinions or feedback I have in what I have heard from my study participants, rather than engage in independent program evaluation of any kind. In fact, my interviewees offered plentiful suggestions replete with supporting reasoning and evidence of their necessity, which have been detailed at length in Chapter 4.

Therefore, I see my contribution as primarily offering a bird's-eye view of this wisdom I have collected, having had the opportunity to synthesize the perspectives I heard as a whole and attempt to report the themes that emerged from those viewpoints. A mentor in my field offered an apt analogy for what I have sought to do in the previous chapter and will seek to do in this chapter: to separate the light reflected from the "prism" of the M.A. program and Rwandan peacebuilding into its disparate "colors", analyzing and naming the perspectives, then reflecting them back out into the world as the rainbow that they already are by sharing the narrative of the common threads and themes I witnessed.

In that vein, I hope I can build on what my participants have already recommended by offering strategies for implementing those recommendations, perhaps touching on blind spots that could only be observed by an outsider. With that mindset as the foundation, all three of these recommendations are an outgrowth of the wisdom and experience they shared with me during my time in Rwanda.

First, as a response to Research Question /Discourse Theme 1 (IMPACT) and the three findings linked to them, I offer my reasoning for the value of a paradigm shift towards embracing constructive criticism as nurturing in the service of achieving the intended impact, rather than threatening. I explain how this attitudinal change could bolster the momentum of progress for CCM, the UR as a whole, and even Rwanda as a society.

Second, as a response to Research Question/Discourse Theme 2 (IMPLEMENTATION) and the six findings linked to them, I make a case for why CCM (and any peace studies program at an HLI) could benefit from increased autonomy and process transparency, as these changes may offset some of the inherent disadvantages of working within a strong bureaucracy the UR.

Third, as a response to Research Question/Discourse Theme 3 (INSIGHTS) and the three findings linked to them, I explore the added value to the M.A. program (or any postsecondary peace studies program) of diversifying its sources of both funding and partnerships.

Finally, I explain in detail the numerous follow-up actions I commit to taking as a practitioner and an academic in service of these recommendations.

IMPACT: Embrace Constructive Criticism as Nurturing Rather Than Threatening

The first recommendation I offer is based on not only comments from participants, but also the broader impression I had after spending time in Rwanda as a researcher. I came away

from my field work in Rwanda with a high level of respect for the cultural valuing of a united front, and the fact that Rwandans prefer to work out problems internally, rather than publicly, in part because clearly after 25 years of sustained peace in such a densely populated postconflict country, something about that strategy is working. However, I would also argue that part of what sustains and even amplifies the aforementioned disadvantages of bureaucracy is the staleness that results when people do not feel free to offer less than glowing feedback.

Granted, I say these things as a foreign researcher, knowing that Rwanda has had unique and profound difficulty with people like me in a way that some countries have not. There have been numerous instances of Rwanda welcoming outsiders into their communities only to have them leave and publicly declare that the country is essentially doing it all wrong. To use a colloquial term, one could say that when it comes to being open to critique, they have been burned before, especially by non-Rwandans.

Indeed, I understand why the process of opening up to researchers or potential partners needs to be difficult and rigorous; it is a very intimate and vulnerable act to allow outsiders to come and make observations and hope they "get it". Rwandans are clearly proud of their culture and their achievements and justifiably do not want their perspectives and their progress twisted into misunderstandings that will then be broadcast to a wider populace, and perhaps misrepresent whom they genuinely believe themselves to be.

Knowing all these things was the driver in why I tried to take great pains in my methodological design to avoid doing a disservice to people and organizations with whom I interacted during my visit. Add to that the genuinely urgent need to prevent the divisiveness that led to the Genocide, which the country has countered by promoting a national identity rather than

primarily ethnic identities, and it is easy to grasp why it is intentionally tricky in Rwanda to express criticism or even controversial opinions in many arenas.

However, this closing of the ranks attitude when it comes to criticism has led to not only a more difficult environment for outside researchers and partners, but also a more closed environment for healthy discussion among Rwandan compatriots, including those who are stakeholders in the M.A. program.

The most important commentary I can make on this subject is that I am not alone in believing this mindset to be a good idea for Rwandan institutions; my participants all expressed how much they wished for this paradigm shift in one way or another. Informally, I found nearly every study participant was open to feedback themselves, which is actually another consequence of combining heavy bureaucracy with confusing communication about policies: the broader structure does not accurately reflect those who are a part of that structure and over time can even cause them to feel disenfranchised from it.

From my perspective, I found the party line attitude (both at the UR and from Government agencies with whom I dealt) starkly different from the spirit of openness and humility I experienced person to person with the individuals I interviewed. For example, one of the UR administrators I met who dealt with consulting projects very freely shared the relevant policy documents with me and insisted "do not hesitate to give us an idea of what you think we can do better, because like any business or anything, we can have challenges. . . . Where you see that there is something missing, we can try to modify it" (UR Administrator G, S. P.).

Relatedly, a number of faculty members and administrators claimed that the lack of openness to this kind of thinking has stunted the development of structures that would allow for

M.A. program improvement, such as systematic and regular evaluations. They explained that such data would be invaluable to gather from current students after each course concludes, as well as alumnae, in addition to more robust evaluations of and by faculty members and staff. These processes require a particular set of skills in monitoring and reporting of evaluative criteria, and getting them right takes practice, both of which are discouraged in the absence of an environment where feedback is welcomed, whether positive or not.

To that end, one longtime Western faculty member at the UR suggested that maybe "we can create a culture where you can have a venue to file complaints in a clear manner. I mean, since they are so obsessed with procedures, maybe they should create a system to channel these complaints, maybe even in an anonymous way" (UR Faculty A, S. P.), but such a tool is unlikely to even be considered for implementation in the absence of a culture that values feedback. She concurred with my conclusion, saying that "I don't really like the fact that the will of portraying everything positively sometimes may prevent such discussions that are very easy and very basic from happening" (UR Faculty A, S. P.), even going so far as to say that such a culture causes people to be timid about taking initiative or even apathetic.

As I described in detail in Chapter 4, the goals of the M.A. program and the UR alike include fostering leadership qualities in graduates, such as critical thinking and willingness to assume responsibility, qualities which may well be dampened in the absence of an institutional culture that cannot absorb anything except rosy praise.

Luckily, the UR can draw on its rich history of encouraging such an attitude, as one of my participants reminded me when I asked him whether it was realistic to have an atmosphere that welcomes questions and concerns. He immediately insisted "yes, why not? Absolutely!

That's what people are encouraged to do in *itorero*—constructive criticism! . . . You don't have to understand something the way I do. Remember, we were created equal, but we may have different interests" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.). What I took from this inspiring exchange was that nothing needs to be lost from mutual openness, whether what is shared is positive or not.

IMPLEMENTATION: Mitigate Bureaucratic Disadvantages with Increased Autonomy and Process Transparency

The second recommendation I will expound upon is in response to the fact that, as Chapter 4 addressed on numerous fronts, my participants unanimously agreed that both the UR and Rwandan governance apparatuses in general are fraught with bureaucracy. Admittedly, this high- level of hierarchy and organization has yielded many advantages for Rwanda throughout its history, such as being the only African country whose administrative structure was left unchanged by colonial conquerors due to its effectiveness (UR Administrator D, S. P., and verified by numerous other sources).

However, participants also argued that, at the time of the study, the level of bureaucracy in Rwanda and at the UR in particular was a double-edged sword, in terms of the institution's ability to meet its mission and realize its vision, in part because such heavy bureaucracy was combined with lack of clarity in how leaders communicate on issues like chain of command for problem resolving and appropriate procedures for various tasks.

More to the point of this study, the M.A. program and CCM were hampered by the existing bureaucratic structures and procedures in the form of at least four potential unintended consequences, namely inadvertently exclusion, the appearance of impropriety, lost opportunities

for revenue or partnership and diminished quality. I will offer an example of each before proceeding to a presentation of two tactics that may alleviate these issues.

In the case of inadvertent exclusion, one example raised by multiple participants was the supposedly monthly meetings held by CCM staff, which represent a critical opportunity for participatory input to be relayed to decision makers about problems, concerns, and ideas. A number of interviewees reported that all faculty members and administrators, and even students, were welcome to attend these meetings. However, when I asked other participants about these meetings, they insisted that they are never reliably told what was happening or the details of place and time, nor were such meetings scheduled in such a way as to allow for wide participation (i.e., they were apparently held during times when many classes were already taking place). If this reality was accurate, it could be sending the message, whether consciously or not, that only administrators were actually welcome to attend.

As to the appearance of impropriety, this issue underscored again the problem of having complex bureaucracy without correspondingly clear and consistent communication. An issue raised by numerous contacts with whom I met was the ongoing delay in payment to UR faculty members and staff, apparently for months already by the time I visited, and with very little explanation by those in high levels of leadership. Some interviewees pointed out that in the past, the same thing happened with the issue of procurement and why the UR's reports on expenditures indicated that they were paying much higher than the going rate for most supplies.

One even mused that, although she would never accuse anyone of stealing money or anything else untoward, it was possible those affected could conclude something dishonest was taking place when there was no responsiveness to such understandably upsetting issues. She

wondered about it candidly, saying that "of course, if you don't give explanation, that's what everyone thinks, [that] it's mismanagement or bad accounting. . . . Why is it like that? Should there only be some who are connected to such information?" (UR Faculty A, S. P.).

The example of lost opportunities for revenue or partnership was raised even more frequently and urgently by most participants, as the possible fallout from frustrating and convoluted bureaucracy. Interestingly, even one contact I made who was not an interviewee but with whom I spent a lot of time (the driver for my first host family, a recently returned Rwandan refugee from the DRC) corroborated this problem and testified that although he was grateful to be back because Rwanda was safer in every respect than the DRC, he nonetheless had found it discouraging as a place to be innovative.

He offered the example of those ordinary people who, without much capital or experience, might seek to start a modest business like a fruit cart, which in the DRC—absent of any enforced regulations for such endeavors—could have be done quite easily, albeit without much security or protections. On the contrary, he said that to start any new venture in Rwanda was so time-consuming and complicated that someone without existing contacts or high levels of education might be discouraged from even making the attempt.

This kind of testimony was echoed at the UR level, with interviewees lamenting how hard it was to launch virtually anything. I asked people both in and outside of CCM how long it might typically take to launch a new partnership, for example, or even a new short course, and multiple people agreed that if you wanted to start something in 2019, you would have to begin the process right then (it was June 2017 at the time), and that even then, red tape might delay things. They acknowledged that the 2013 merger of all (former) National University of Rwanda

campuses into the umbrella institution that was the current UR was still causing repercussions, as was the likely combination of the College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS) with the College of Business and Economics (CBE), and that the growing pains from these attempts to streamline were to be expected. However, despite their sympathy for the reasons underlying such problems, they nonetheless all confided that it made day-to-day functioning extremely difficult, much less attempting anything new and innovative.

Lastly, my participants argued that the combination of thick hierarchical structures with opaque communication practices is likely to lead to diminished quality in the M.A. program and for the UR in general. One former UR administrator now leading a civil society organization candidly summarized the viewpoint I heard over and over again, that CCM may be innovative and successful in many ways, but that

> the Centre is part of the biggest university with heavy bureaucracy; it's affecting things a lot! There is no common vision of a unit. The unit is not setting a strategy to really have well-coordinated and visionary programs. No plan! And to make it, you have to be competitive, . . . and then have really, really good coordination. (UR Administrator H, S. P.)

One specific example he offered of such lacking coordination that others also mentioned, and which arguably affects quality in the M.A. program, was the changed policy on payment for teaching master's versus undergraduate courses.

Apparently, at one time, full-time faculty members were contracted to teach a certain number of undergraduate classes as part of their salary and were paid a supplemental amount for teaching graduate courses, whereas now they receive no extra money for doing so. Unsurprisingly, this trend has demotivated many faculty members from accepting M.A. courses as part of their schedule, which means (as some of my participants pointed out) that CCM and

other departments have been forced to scramble to recruit alternate faculty members, who are often neither specialized, nor as academically experienced or qualified.

With these four potential pitfalls in mind, there is a particular tactic that comes to mind as an outside observer that may be useful in keeping such consequences at bay and continuing on the path of continuous improvement, namely, to work collaboratively towards coherent structures in data sharing and communication. This strategy has the potential to catalyze more autonomous units and leaders at the UR, as well as greater transparency of processes.

Work towards structures that are coherent in data sharing and communication. Related to the aforementioned attitudinal change, I would like to respectfully suggest that more coherent structures for responsiveness and information dissemination would go a long way towards countering the negative impact of heavy bureaucracy, both inside and outside the UR.

Allow me to first make the case for how such an improvement would benefit UR staff and students. For example, my advisor had the poignant experience of interviewing a faculty member who claimed confidently that 60% of professors at the University were women, when in fact, females represented less than a quarter of the faculty (UR, 2018a). She deduced that his inflated perception was due to anecdotal experience but expressed concern over this misinformation because, as she argued, when an institution's own faculty members do not know the true situation in areas of inequity like gender, it was not possible to cultivate allies for positive change.

I experienced similar vagueness among my participants when asking for official figures on enrollment demographics and the like, which seemed innocent enough on the face of it, but it was true that if key UR stakeholders did not have access to facts that reflected their institution's

realities or were unclear where to find such details, widespread buy-in on collective goals for the future is impossible. This problem once again goes to the issue of clear communication about and dissemination of actionable data.

In the same way, students and potential applicants may be lacking clarity about how to find information relevant to their decision making. Most of my faculty member and administrative interviewees lamented the lack of detail that was publicly available or easily searchable regarding M.A. program requirements, either in terms of the course sequence or in terms of the thesis requirements. Thus, students may have been left feeling unsure of the expectations to which they were being held. One administrator made this argument more persuasively than I could for more coherently organized structures in his comment to me that

> the way we see this, you need to have an institution that is working, that has proper policies, that has incentive mechanisms, for the people to flourish. they need to do research on relevant issues. But to do that research, they need to be having the right environment in their home departments, in their colleges, even at the UR level. (UR Administrator F, S. P.)

A particular example of such a "right environment" was offered to me by a veteran faculty member in both the M.A. program and elsewhere in the University was the need for a central repository of published research at CCM.

I mentioned in passing that I had tried to find such resources prior to my arrival but came up empty; he responded with regret that such a unit did not exist anywhere in the University, but that with CCM having started as a research center, it should take the lead in organizing for such an outcome. However, he was unsure of who could be in charge of such an endeavor, acknowledging that faculty members and administrators alike were often overloaded, but hinted that someone could be assigned to fulfill that task if enough institutional will was present.

Actually, this arena is one in which expanded partnerships, as explicated in Chapter 4 and in the second recommendation below, could make a concrete contribution, especially given the typically deeper experience Western academics have with navigating the publishing world and the organizational structures that tend to come with it.

Relatedly, although there are certain subsections of the UR website with key documentation posted, it is not organized in such a way that relevant evidence of such meetings could be easily accessed, such as minutes, agendas, and the like. Thus, this problem of heavy bureaucracy without clear organization of decisions made by leadership is one that seems to affect the UR as a whole, not only CCM. Admittedly, some of this disconnect may be exacerbated by the merger in 2013 which brought together all autonomously operating public colleges that were part of the then-National University of Rwanda (UNR) into the current University of Rwanda. Four years later when I visited, the implications of the merger were still being worked out, in terms of the specific chain of command for various decisions, the appropriate procedures for issues like starting new programs and other such academic tasks.

This last point leads me to my argument for how more coherent structures for information sharing and communicating would benefit not only UR stakeholders, but potential outside partners as well. What I have since learned is a common phenomenon of extremely contentious and frustratingly slow research approval for outside researchers—both at the Ministry of Education and at the UR—has been reflected in the experiences of both myself and my advisor. Neither of us have ever visited, studied or done research in a country where the difficulty of getting research clearance and academic affiliates was anywhere near as complex or difficult as Rwanda, not even the former Soviet Union, China, or Afghanistan.

Thus, I am compelled in the spirit of candor and deep love I have developed for Rwanda to tell the truth, even if hard to hear: from a diplomatic standpoint, the message such an arduous process is sending to foreign academics and potential partners is that they are simply not welcome, no matter how respectful their intent may be.

Whether true or not, the exhausting experience of navigating these channels made us both think twice before returning to Rwanda for research or other academic endeavors (despite my strong desire to initiate an ongoing partnership with the M.A. program), and left us with the impression that the goal of it all was to weed us out, or to purposely throw up roadblocks. This reality is especially sad given that on an individual level, we were invariably welcomed with open arms, and so the official messaging could not have been more different than the impression with which I was left in the friendships I developed with Rwandan colleagues, which indicates to me that there is a disconnect between individuals' feelings about outsiders and the "groupthink" attitude towards them.

Even more sobering is the fact that it is possible that none of these deterrents are intentional, but rather simply a less-than-developed set of mechanisms for managing the research approval process. As many of my interviewees reported, the current climate promotes an environment in which no one knows who has authority to answer many questions, nor does anyone feel confident to assume authority at the various levels of decision making.

Beyond the difficulty my advisor and I both experienced in getting approval to do our research, there was also a significant disparity in how we were treated due to our statuses that played out in official channels. Admittedly, she too dealt with bureaucratic delays, but her approval at the UR level came in a fraction of the time mine did (despite her acknowledgment

that my application was just as clear, compelling, and uncontroversial as hers was), and more importantly, her official research permit was issued in a matter of days without her being held to any of the stringent standards the Ethics Committee applied to me. For example, I had to present and make a case for my proposed project to a group of about 10 Rwandan officials, which she was not required to do.

Furthermore, I was told after an already-long wait following my presentation that I had to have my interview protocol, Informed Consent form and Use of Name form translated into Kinyarwanda, ostensibly to offer fair access and clarity to my interviewees. I tried to explain that my sample consisted only of individuals with at least an undergraduate education, and in most cases a master's or even a doctorate, and that I feared they would actually be offended by my offering them Kinyarwanda forms, as if to say their English (the language of academia) was lacking, but they insisted. So, I spent extra money to have a gracious Rwandan colleague (now a friend as one can imagine) perform an overnight translation.

I resubmitted these forms along with dozens of other changes they claimed I had to make before they would approve my project, only to later discover that this translation requirement is not enforced for all researchers. Not only does this disparity in application of policies and procedures have the potential to discourage foreign researchers from coming to Rwanda, especially younger and self-funded researchers (indeed, it almost made my project impossible to implement), but also it demonstrates a logical fallacy. If indeed the concern they expressed to me is true is that foreign researchers must be held to rigorous standards to ensure they do not misrepresent the country in unfair or negative ways, it would stand to reason that they would uphold such a standard in a more egalitarian way rather than on a case-by-case basis.

Having said all this, I want to take a page from Rwanda's strengths-based approach to peace education and report a few encouraging examples of progress already being made on this first recommendation—progress on which CCM and the UR could reasonably build momentum. For example, I heard from a handful of contacts at CCM that the Centre was exploring the possibility of starting its own Consultancy Unit to allow for more direct outside partnerships, though it remains to be seen whether this change would be feasible, either financially or procedurally by the umbrella UR Consultancy Unit. One UR high-level administrator supported this idea and directly echoed this recommendation I have been laying out by stressing to me that

> management of this master's program, they need minimum autonomy to avoid bureaucracy around decisions. . . . This is a minimum really—to make it autonomous, to have this partnership and manage it. People will get more interested. Second, to bring the managers of the four [M.A.] programs to be more effective in the ownership of the program. It will be their own program. Otherwise, if they know that even the minimum requests have to process up to the Vice Chancellor, no one will get interested to engage in this. It will require them to move from the Centre, go to the Headquarters, and so on, and so on. (UR Administrator H, S. P.)

What he envisioned was happening in some corners of UR operations. For example, one administrator with whom I met, who thankfully spearheading many partnership initiatives, was a prime example of the kind of proactive initiative and autonomous decision making. The attitude he communicated to me about how he saw his work and his contribution to making the UR a better institution was refreshing and one I hope his colleagues will consider adopting:

> In a central office, we need to be helping people and guiding them. We need to be responsible, not wait for people to complain. Otherwise, the partnership motivation will go. In collaboration, you have to be straight; you need to not be passive, not avoid their questions. Yeah, it makes it hard for people to trust the University, so you find they are not motivated to continue. . . . Because you need to be respecting people's time. So, if you want to build relationships with partners or investment associates, you need to be responsive. . . . But you have to know how to communicate with people! (UR Administrator C, S. P.)

He readily walked me through some prime examples of such responsiveness in his sphere of influence, such as his office's website, which (unlike most UR subsites) has all of his correct contact details and even his photograph, so that people can easily recognize him as the contact

person they need. He has advocated for such simple changes and other UR subsites as well. This kind of openness, adaptability, and clarity in communication is precisely what I am advocating for, as reflected by my study participants on the whole.

INSIGHTS: Diversify Funding and Partnerships by Building Mutually Beneficial, Ongoing International Exchanges

The third recommendation I offer is an extension of one of the four suggestions for improvement that I presented in Chapter 4, specifically the collective participant suggestion to deeper partnerships with relevant organizations, outside of but particularly inside Rwanda. My observation of that desire, combined with some of the financial constraints the M.A. program faces, have led me to the conclusion that one possible response to the latter that would also serve to address the former would be to focus equal attention on the creation of substantive international exchanges.

Regarding how such exchanges might alleviate funding concerns, it should be noted that in a country where still less than 17% of the population aged 19 to 23 enrolls in any form of tertiary education, much less graduate programs (MINEDUC, 2018, p. ix), one can imagine how few potential applicants are in a position to pay their own way through the M.A. program without help. It is an arguably huge risk for such would-be students to make the sacrifice of embracing a two-year intensive master's program without more support available.

It could also be argued that Rwandan students are voting with their money, and that at present there is a definite trend of postsecondary students away from the UR and towards private HLIs. In only one academic year, despite an expansion of program offerings, the UR's overall enrollment declined by 2%, which amounted to a loss of over 600 students (MINEDUC, 2018),

and this trend has been a multiyear phenomenon that shows no signs of plateauing without some strategic response.

Of course, the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation may be especially inaccessible because unlike the Genocide Studies and Security Studies programs, the UR offers no tuition relief for this program. Thus, in the Rwandan economic context, this unique graduate program of study may simply be out of reach for many promising local applicants.

The reason for this differential funding situation is something of a chicken or the egg dilemma: despite asking many people about it, it remained unclear to me whether the Peace Studies M.A. did not offer funding because its students were working (and therefore the assumption was made that their organizations could offset the cost), or whether the program only enrolled working students because there was no direct university funding for them. Unfortunately, it likely meant that CCM could not reasonably rely on Government money to add to their coffers if they were to seek to offer additional funding support to M.A. students; instead, such funding would likely need to come from expanded partnerships or other such sources.

Although the UR at large has many partnerships, CCM derived the vast majority of funding from SIDA, its primary partner. Many study participants warned of the danger and unsustainability of relying on a single funder, stressing that rather than looking to one star for light, it would be preferable to look to a whole constellation, as it were. One study participant, who was brought from a UR administrative role into an executive position at a local NGO about a year before we met, recalled that he was recruited to respond to precisely this issue.

In fact, he described this new organization's situation, with having only one funder, as a crisis in which their operations were at risk of collapse, or at least vulnerable to severe cutbacks. Of his own volition, he related this urgent scenario to CCM's predicament, asserting to me that

> it means they need to connect with international universities. . . . This is a serious problem for a unit in Rwanda, in our particular society—we can't sustain such a program relying on just one partner. I used to say, "SIDA money is very dangerous if you don't have alternative partnerships with others". . . . It will be the end of the program because we failed, one, to connect institutions locally—we failed to have other partners—and two, we failed to connect this program to reality, to motivate people really to sustain it. So, it's very important to partner with other organizations. (UR Administrator H, S. P.)

He further made the case that apart from fiscal sustainability, having only one funder can critically limit an organization ability to define its own priorities and to make bold changes in response to data or new challenges.

Other participants alluded to this problem of CCM having less autonomy with a single funder, with one longtime faculty member lamenting many instances at the UR in which he recalls initiatives having money behind them and continuing to receive manpower and other local support, even if their outcomes demonstrate their ineffectiveness, simply because the funding remains available (CCM Faculty F, S. P.). He was not implying that the UR-Sweden partnership has been ineffective, but only making the case the money drives programmatic agendas and sometimes even the rationale for launching or maintaining certain initiatives.

Another participant made the same case without prompting from me and shared that "there is a saying: 'if you are being given, you have no choice. You are just given'" (CSO Leader F, S. P.). He gave the example of the funding that is available for Genocide Students graduate students, but not to Peace Studies graduate students, which her argued may send the message that the former is of a higher priority to CCM and the UR, when in reality, that program is simply the one for which partner funding has been approved.

Although most participants who mentioned SIDA spoke of CCM's relationship with the organization in quite positive terms, nonetheless they also tended to emphasize the caveat that less dependency would be preferable, that "SIDA have been contributing very strongly to building capacities, but normally, the next step should be to able to be autonomous—maybe by attracting students from abroad. . . . Yeah, it's hard, [but] the idea is to be sustainable by ourselves" (CCM Faculty C, S. P.). It is from this optimistic position that I make my recommendation to focus on international partnerships.

Part of the input that led me to this recommendation was that once the notion occurred to me early on in my field work, I raised it very tentatively with most of my study participants, and virtually every single one not only responded enthusiastically about the desirability of creating at least one mutually beneficial international exchange program, but even offered specifics on how they could offer particular assistance to making that happen. Therefore, I inadvertently had the opportunity to brainstorm with leaders in the Rwandan higher education and civil society spheres and came away with the overwhelmingly positive conclusion that such a program is not only wanted, but feasible.

Even with the heavy emphasis my study participants placed on the goal of becoming more autonomous, most tempered that idea by also insisting that CCM genuinely desires to open up to scholars from a broader global context. As one faculty member put it, when an academic identity is too isolated, "you have one school of thought, which is not healthy. . . . I think those elements [of openness] are very key in the academic arena, to really be conversant with other academicians in the same areas, but from different viewpoints" (CCM Faculty C, S. P.).

Another excitedly described the existing push for recruitment of students from East Africa, but went a step further to ask "what about students from Europe, the United States—I mean, far from here? What about coming together? So, I would really prefer students from different parts of the world meeting and sharing their experiences, learning from each other" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.). Neither of these individuals, nor any other leader I spoke to, couched their desire for international partnerships in a desperation to receive anything. In fact, in stark contrast to that attitude, the highest-ranking UR official with whom I met argued that "our partnerships are not projects to try to teach *us* a lesson or to improve us necessarily. . . . People want to work with us because, like you say, what we are doing is exciting" (UR Administrator A, S. P.).

The same attitude of pride in what they have to offer, but in receptivity to learning from outside visitors was evident in my civil society participants, who likewise enthusiastically offered to include their organizations as part of any international exchange that might conceivably follow from this study. They insisted that to bring visiting students or staff IRDP or CNLG or NURC would undoubtedly add value to their experience of Rwanda.

My CNLG contact spoke with pride about being able to help visitors from abroad connect theory with practice by even introducing them to prisoners who have been convicted of genocide. Similarly, one alumna with whom I spoke described an exciting M.A. organizational initiative called the Institute for Good Governance, which does extensive reconciliation work in outlying Rwandan communities, and which is already well-poised within its staff to guide visitors through some of the most critical realms of peacebuilding (Alumna D, S. P.).

In fact, the only drawback to such international partnerships, according to longtime CCM staff was when they happened in the form of one-off delegations of visitors, in which the Centre expended time and energy to host students or staff from abroad, only to find they themselves derived very little sustained benefit from doing so. Instead, as one former CCM Director recalls, "we were welcoming them like that, but nothing really came out of it. We could only go talk to them, and then say goodbye" (CCM Faculty B, S. P.).

In my previous work with study abroad programs through the Institute of International Education and at the university level, it pains me to report that I can corroborate this phenomenon of one-sided benefits as being all too common for such programs. I have found this issue to be particularly pervasive in Western programs housed in developing countries, where such experiences often demonstrate the unfortunate combination of a naïve "save the world" missionary mentality with an individualistic ethos of soaking up all the learning and new "exotic" information possible without considering the cost to one's hosts.

To be fair, twenty-somethings from typically privileged and sheltered backgrounds cannot reasonably be expected to act with the nuance of seasoned ambassadors in unfamiliar countries; however, some of the known drawbacks of international exchange programs can be counteracted with humble circumspection throughout the planning process and keeping the priority of mutual benefit at the forefront.

As one scholar on the subject of ethical exchanges has eloquently summarized, it is not that there is anything grossly unjust about Western students wanting to learn and absorb what a developing country has to offer, but rather "the problem lies in the assumption that marginalized people are always at the ready to enlighten the privileged" (Martin, 2016), and that they derive

some inherent benefit simply by exposure to people from our countries without careful thought being given to what we can actually concretely contribute.

In the UR's case, I hope I have persuasively demonstrated that they and CCM have so many myriad strengths already, such that they are clearly not some desperate poor entity in need of whatever scraps any Western university will throw them. On the contrary, the M.A. program and CCM's other offerings are among the most innovative, robust, and consciously created peace education initiatives that I myself have ever encountered, and exposure to them has much to teach anyone lucky enough to visit for themselves.

That being said, I have also laid out the known challenges the program and the Centre face, as well as the arenas in which they already know they could make use of additional support, such as in publishing assistance, expanded consideration for psychosocial well-being, greater funding availability for student support, etc. For example, one of the key administrators responsible for resource mobilization at the UR mentioned to me that he was then thinking of applying for funding to host foreign interns because such individuals with international exposure could certainly shed light on the UR's blind spots when it comes to recognizing potential funding opportunities (UR Administrator C, S. P.).

Indeed, as a potential funding opportunity, I can attest that creating at least one ongoing international exchange with an American university would bring in money that could be funneled into areas such as offsetting the burden of tuition fees for Peace Studies M.A. students or supporting the aforementioned creation of the local Ph.D. program in peace studies. In fact, the focus of my master's thesis in 2012 was the promise of international exchanges as a sustainable revenue stream for African universities, and I am convinced CCM is a near-ideal

example of a setting where this scenario could work quite well. I cannot speak authoritatively of other Western countries policies, but for American institutions, many have policies that allow their students to channel their tuition and financial aid into paying for their study abroad periods, at least for some programs.

Not only could CCM stand to benefit from both expanded funding and expanded outside perspectives, but the American universities would benefit as well. My home institution, Loyola Marymount University (LMU), is a prime example of a commonplace scenario, in which even with significant help offered to allow broader access to the school for low-SES students, the demographics tend to lean towards young people of privilege, and this trend holds even more true among students who study abroad.

Also common is the reality that even with nearly 30 countries represented in LMU's study abroad portfolio of programs, Ghana and South Africa represent the only two countries in the list from Sub-Saharan Africa. This picture of African under-representation in study abroad offerings is the same for most American universities, even though many (including LMU) have evolved to have social justice and the need to inculcate moral responsibility at the forefront of their missions.

Thus, there may well be a need to initiate an international exchange program that does things quite differently from the outset in order to ensure both sustainability and truly mutual benefit. To that end, I offer two specific suggestions for promising exchange partnerships that came out of my conversations with study participants, both of which diverge from the typical study abroad model of undergraduates visiting for a summer or a semester. One is the creation of a locally-based doctoral program codirected with a Western institution that is particularly

focused on educational leadership as an avenue of peacebuilding, and the other is adding value to the newly launched Transformative Citizenship module by bring foreign students into that experience and having Rwandan students deepen their own learning by teaching these visitors.

Co-create a locally based doctoral program in educational leadership. This programmatic example is unique in that it may not even need to entail a physical exchange of students, but the benefits offered to both sides could be significant, nonetheless. For example, my home institution of LMU will launch its brand new fully online Ed.D. in Educational Leadership for Social Justice in Fall 2019.

This launch represents a sea change for our School of Education, as our previous programming was necessarily to leaders residing in Los Angeles, whereas now students can be striving for educational improvement from virtually anywhere in the world. Furthermore, despite being a quickly rising star in the ranks of R2 universities, the School of Education nonetheless offers significant financial support to all incoming doctoral students. Thus, the online Ed.D. program is potentially that much more accessible to students from developing countries and perhaps students from CCM in particular, though we are far from alone in offering a program whose components would make it feasible for partnership with the UR.

Let me be clear that I would never advocate that such a program take the place of the imminent local Ph.D. in Peace Studies that CCM is building, but rather it offers a supplemental strategy for ensuring the Centre has the critical mass of doctoral degree holders it will need to sustain ongoing research supervision and quality master's level teaching. Any Rwandan students who enroll would have the opportunity to continue working locally as contributing leaders to Rwanda's development, as LMU's doctoral offerings are designed to be completed concurrently

with full-time jobs, and yet these students would glean the incalculable advantage of exposure to rigorous training in production of competitive research projects, which they could then bring back to their institutions and to CCM. Because students and even faculty members for the fully online program could conceivably reside anywhere, this option also means that the perspectives they gain from participation (via fellow students or faculty members) would not need to be myopically American but could be globally informed.

Furthermore, not only would graduates of such an Ed.D. program have the capacity to teach and publish in Rwanda and internationally, but they would also be far better equipped to embrace opportunities for administrative leadership at Rwandan HLIs. Again, I will defer to the insight offered by my highest-ranking UR participant, who explained to me that

> what we also need to develop partnerships and collaborations around is capacity building of the University, and our research managers, academic policy managers, those critical administrators that run the universities, you know? . . . People graduate with Ph.D.s around the world and we assume that they know how to do these things. But we have to focus a lot more—as we are!—on scholarship *with* leadership and management [wherein] if you can demonstrate tangible contribution to the leadership and management of the University, then that will count towards your promotion. (UR Administrator A, S. P.)

Thus, a partnership with a high-quality, online Ed.D. program like LMU's could be attractive not only for CCM M.A. program graduates, but even for UR's promising master's level faculty member who are deemed promising as future administrative leaders. Such a program could fill a gap and offer the UR the tangible benefit of well-prepared, social justice-minded innovators who will ultimately further improve the educational experience for Rwandan students and deepen the University's influence on Rwandan progress.

Numerous study participants expressed intrigue upon hearing about my own participation in LMU's Ed.D. program in Educational Leadership for Social Justice. They examined the LMU ID card holders I offered as a thank you gift, into which I inserted my own business card, and

often asked many curious follow-up questions about the program. One alumna said it would be her dream to attend such a program herself (Alumna D, S. P.), and one administrator was so enthused that he said he would love to even take part in a staff exchange or apprenticeship at a comparable university office in the United States for a few weeks, much less have the opportunity to learn from such colleagues in a complex program (UR Administrator C, S. P.).

Another civil society leader (formerly an administrator at the UR) was so interested that he specifically told me he wanted to stay in touch about spearheading such a program in Rwanda because he felt it was sorely needed and thus far not being offered anywhere in the country. Once I described the kind of content and critical self-reflection the Ed.D. program at LMU has offered me and my fellow students, he made sense of what I shared by summarizing it as "education which transforms me because it has to transform my environment! How to teach young people to say, 'am I really transforming my society?' It's self-responsibility" (UR Administrator H, S. P.), and connected this conclusion to a speech President Kagame had made at the time of his re-election, in which he asserted that Rwanda needs "many Kagames", young leaders who are competent to succeed the current cadre to ensure Rwanda can maintain its progress.

Add value to the new University-wide Transformative Citizenship module. A second possibility for international exchange partnership would be through the new module that all UR students will complete to teach them about Transformative Citizenship. Although it would, of course, look very different than an exchange with a doctoral program, this option is promising in its own way because the vast majority of study abroad programs serve undergraduates, in the same way that this module will primarily serve Rwandan undergraduates.

My original thought when I initially considered the value of an international exchange program with CCM was to do so directly with the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation, but this idea was complicated by the realities of graduate student professional and family responsibilities that could make an international exchange unrealistic, on either side. With that conundrum in mind, the more I heard about the Transformative Citizenship module, the more I realized that such a program might be a better fit. It too offers an innovative model of peace education, but with a population much more comparable to American (or Western) study abroad demographics.

Furthermore, many scholars and education experts agreed that learners derive deeper understanding from having the opportunity to teach the material themselves in some way, and so I realized that an exchange might provide a unique opportunity for Rwandan students in the module to internalize what they learn by concluding the course, then having American students visit at that time, and facing the challenge of helping them understand that same material. In this way, the Rwandan students are more likely to retain the lessons from the module, and the visiting foreign students are more likely to hear a far more nuanced picture of Rwanda both pre- and postgenocide that they would get with a typical delegation-style visit to Genocide memorials and the like, one that is far more strengths-based and complex.

In fact, I would contend that American students in particular would be challenged to take a more in-depth critical look at the United States and how at peace we really are when presented with material about how Rwanda is bravely addressing continued examples of structural violence in their postconflict society. Even I, as a doctoral candidate, having studied both peace education and African development for 15 years prior to my field work, was challenged by witnessing

Rwanda's strategies for peacebuilding in person, and returned to my home country seeing it in a different light. Such personal and collective insights are precisely the kind of mutually beneficial, symbiotic relationships I would strongly advocate for in other studies.

In closing, this recommendation to cultivate stronger partnerships may be reasonably directed not just at CCM, or even the UR, but to Rwandan leaders in general who are striving across sectors for sustainable peace and development, as such interdependence is likely to make such efforts even more robust.

Follow-Up Steps I Commit to Taking as a "Pracademic"

During my master's study in Boston, I had the good fortune of being exposed to the work of Professor Mari Fitzduff, Founding Director of the Coexistence and Conflict M.A. program in Brandeis University's Heller School for Social Policy and Management. During this time, on more than one occasion, I heard her use the term "pracademic" as a portmanteau of "practitioner" and "academic" to refer to herself and others like her who consider their identities as scholars and professionals in the field to be inextricably intertwined. In the years since, I have come to embrace that attitude towards oneself as my own and seek to place equal value on my academic work and my practical impact on the work around me, hopefully with the two areas dovetailing as much as possible.

Thus, in the spirit of the decolonizing methodology with which I sought to conduct this study, I consider it appropriate for me not to close my recommendations section with admonitions of what my study participants ought to do to improve, but rather (with their suggestions in mind) explicate what I myself am prepared to do to move those ideas forward, as

a scholar who has benefited directly from witnessing the inner working of the M.A. program and the Centre for Conflict Management.

First and foremost, I will fulfill my commitment made at the outset of my field work in Rwanda, whereby in order to gain research approval, I was required to agree that I would share the final output of my study with my colleagues at the UR, and also with supervising leaders from the Ethics Committee and at MINEDUC. This was a commitment I happily made, with the hopes that my findings would prove insightful for those readers, as well as readers here in the United States or elsewhere.

Relatedly, because I am aware that the dissertation format is neither realistically nor readily accessible to most interested academics, much less practitioners who might wish to learn about this study, I will be creating a four-page handout as an executive summary of sorts, highlighting the broad takeaways from this investigation and including my contact details for anyone who might wish to learn more through direct conversation with me or my participants.

In the same vein, I will be presenting the results of this study in July 2019 at the Women Leading Education (WLE) biennial conference at the University of Nottingham in the U.K. I have already presented earlier iterations of this work to seek feedback on improving its design and analytical rigor at the 2013 WLE conference in Accra, Ghana, the 2015 University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) Graduate Student Summit in San Diego, CA, the 2016 Peace and Justice Studies Association (PJSA) conference in Castlegar, British Columbia, and at the 2017 WLE conference in Duque de Caxias, Brazil.

Now that I have completed the final product, I am all the more motivated to share the lessons this phenomenal Rwandan program has to offer as broadly as I can within scholarly

circles. As I noted in my Future Directions for Research section above, I will immediately be seeking opportunities to extend this study into aforementioned areas to further draw attention to the innovations happening in Rwandan peace education, as well as triangulate the results presented here with additional data I have gathered. I hope to present on this study's data and any other findings that may emerge in the future at other relevant conferences, and to publish about them in related journals.

More to the point of the recommendations above, I will seek to offer logistical support in the creation of mutually beneficial exchanges. I already applied for a student Fulbright in 2017, with a proposal to conduct this very study; however, the proposal was not successful. In retrospect, I surmise that part of the reason for this initial failure was my lack of robust contacts at the UR, my affiliate university in the proposal. Having worked for years at the Institute of International Education, which manages the administration of Fulbright grants, I can attest that proposals are far more likely to be accepted when applicants can demonstrate that they have already established strong relationships with the educational leaders with whom they intend to partner on their given research or project. That was a disadvantage I had then, but which I no longer have.

As I have described above, nearly every study participant expressed strong enthusiasm for the idea of a mutual exchange of some sort, and even offered to draw in their sphere of influence for such a project, whether an NGO with which they work, or some facet of UR programming. Thus, I am confident that were I to reapply, this time for the Fulbright Scholar Program (as I will no longer be a matriculating student, but a newly minted Ed.D.), I would have a far greater chance of success. Winning an award like the Fulbright would give me the resources

necessary to focus full-time attention on returning to Kigali and, alongside LMU or whatever United States-based institution is best suited for an exchange partnership, organize to launch a new program.

This plan would entail deeper analysis of the UR's existing M.O.U.s, as I now know how stringent they are about the necessity of painstaking attention to proper procedure in order to begin new initiatives, as well as follow-up conversations with LMU's Study Abroad Office leadership or, in the case of partnership with the online Ed.D., discussions with School of Education administrators. Luckily, I feel well-equipped to spearhead such efforts, as I bring to the table over 10 years of working in educational administration, program evaluation, and institutional effectiveness. I see these tools I possess as being part of my potential contribution to making the recommendations in this chapter a reality.

In fact, wider partnerships with foreign institutions would indeed not only serve to diversify funding and scholarly perspectives but could also encourage the development of my other recommendation, namely working towards coherent structures in data sharing and communication. Both of these areas are thorny issues which may benefit from fresh pairs of eyes and enthusiastic willingness to pitch in and offer ideas, all of which are possible if having someone on the ground to facilitate a partnership's beginnings is supported by a Fulbright or similar grant. Even the Vice Chancellor himself was highly supportive of the idea to host someone like me at the UR in order to get a new partnership off the ground. Given all I have learned and heard, I will make it my goal to apply in time for the September 2019 Fulbright deadline for either their Post-Doctoral Scholar and Early Career award, their Flex award, or their Global Scholar Multi-Country award.

Again, I argue that it would be naïve and unfair for a foreign researcher to make recommendations for long-term, time-consuming changes, and simply expect locals to take the lead, thereby placing onerous burdens on University leaders who are already overextended. Obviously, local ownership of any new initiative is critical; however, I am prepared to offer significant time and energy towards these goals if CCM and the UR agree that working towards them would benefit their peace education efforts. As one of my faculty member interviewees aptly summarized, "it's feasible if those involved are committed" (CCM Faculty E, S. P.), and I am prepared to continue my commitment to furthering CCM and its efforts to advance peace.

Epilogue

It is my sincere hope that this study has fulfilled its purposes by co-creating with my participants a rich narrative of the M.A. program in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation at the University of Rwanda. I will close this chapter by once again reasserting that this program, not to mention CCM and the UR on the whole, exceeded even my already-high expectations for what valuable insights could be derived from uncovering the strategies leadership have used for decision making in the face of resource constraints. Indeed, it will not surprise them for me to confirm that they already possess innumerable strengths, which offer a solid foundation on which to continue advancing Rwanda as an example for the world in how to conduct circumspect, sustainable peacebuilding and development. What I hope is a pleasant surprise as an outcome of this study is the momentum it lends to the inclusion of exemplary programs like theirs squarely at the center of global scholarly conversations on best practices for peace education and educational leadership, as they are certainly deserving of such respect and even deference.

Having had the privilege of spending six weeks in Rwanda learning about the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation, along with the Centre for Conflict Management, the University of Rwanda, and the state of peacebuilding in the country as a whole, my overwhelming takeaway is admiration for both the deep commitment Rwandans exhibit to sustaining peace, whatever their sphere of influence may be, and their sophisticated attitude of openness towards change and growth. These qualities are both strong indicators of the likelihood that the M.A. program and peace work generally, will continue to thrive and deepen in Rwanda.

"We recognize we weren't born there. We recognize we're not African by heritage.
But we recognize that if you're going to thrive in a global society,
there must be these kinds of stories that we all hear.
You can't get any darker than neighbor slaughtering neighbor.
But if you can come back from that in 23 years and accomplish what the Rwandans have,
then we all have hope."
(Dr. Elizabeth C. Reilly, Dissertation Chair)

APPENDIX A

TABLE OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Interview Order	Interview Date	Length in Minutes	Recruitment Method	Level of Privacy	Participant Pseudonym	Gender	Professional Affiliation	Age/Career Stage	Nationality
1	05-22-17	60-90	Snowball	Public	CSO Leader F	M	CSO/NGO	Under 30 (Early)	Rwandan
2	06-02-17	30-60	Purposive	Public	CCM Faculty D	M	UR (Fac/Adm)	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
3	06-06-17	60-90	Snowball	Private	CSO Leader C	M	CSO/NGO	50+ (Established)	Rwandan
4		30-60	Purposive	Private	CSO Leader B	M	CSO/NGO	50+ (Established)	Western Expat
5	06-08-17	30-60	Purposive	Semi-Private	UR Administrator A	M	UR (Admin)	50+ (Established)	Western Expat
6		30-60	Snowball	Public	UR Administrator E	M	UR (Fac/Adm)	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
7		60-90	Snowball	Public	CSO Leader H	M	CSO/NGO	Under 30 (Early)	Rwandan
8	06-09-17	60-90	Purposive	Private	CSO Leader A	F	Foreign Entity	Under 30 (Early)	Western Expat
9		30-60	Snowball	Private	Alumna B	F	CSO/NGO	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
10	06-12-17	60-90	Purposive	Semi-Private	UR Administrator C	M	UR (Admin)	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
11		30-60	Snowball	Semi-Private	UR Administrator D	M	UR (Fac/Adm)	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
12		30-60	Purposive	Private	CSO Leader G	F	CSO/NGO	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
13	06-13-17	Under 30	Purposive	Semi-Private	GoR Leader B	F	Govt Agency	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
14		30-60	Snowball	Semi-Private	GoR Leader A	M	Govt Agency	50+ (Established)	African Expat
15		30-60	Purposive	Semi-Private	UR Administrator F	M	UR (Admin)	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
16		30-60	Snowball	Semi-Private	UR Administrator G	M	UR (Admin)	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
17		Under 30	Snowball	Semi-Private	UR Administrator B	M	UR (Admin)	50+ (Established)	African Expat
18	06-14-17	90+	Snowball	Public	UR Administrator H	M	CSO/NGO	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
19	06-15-17	30-60	Snowball	Semi-Private	Alumna C	F	Govt Agency	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
20		60-90	Snowball	Semi-Private	CCM Faculty E	M	UR (Fac/Adm)	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
21		30-60	Purposive	Public	CCM Faculty B	M	UR (Fac/Adm)	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
22	06-18-17	60-90	Snowball	Public	UR Faculty A	F	CSO/NGO	30-50 (Mid)	Western Expat
23	06-19-17	90+	Snowball	Private	CCM Faculty F	M	UR (former CSO)	50+ (Established)	Rwandan
24		90+	Purposive	Public	CCM Faculty G	M	UR (Fac/Adm)	50+ (Established)	Rwandan
25		60-90	Snowball	Public	CSO Leader D	F	CSO/NGO	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
26	06-20-17	30-60	Snowball	Public	CCM Faculty A	M	Govt Agency	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
27		60-90	Snowball	Public	Alumna A	F	CSO/NGO	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
28	06-21-17	30-60	Snowball	Semi-Private	Alumna D	F	Govt Agency	30-50 (Mid)	Rwandan
29		60-90	Snowball	Semi-Private	CCM Faculty C	M	UR (Fac/Adm)	50+ (Established)	Rwandan
30	06-28-17	60-90	Purposive	Private	CSO Leader E	F	Foreign Entity	Under 30 (Early)	Rwandan

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

Informed Consent Form

Date of Preparation: January 10, 2017

Loyola Marymount University
Protocol Number: LMU IRB 2017 SP 42

Impact, Implementation, and Insights of Peace Education: A Case Study of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation Program at the University of Rwanda

1. I hereby authorize Sarah M. Doerrer, Ed.D. candidate to include me in the following research study: **Impact, Implementation, and Insights of Peace Education: A Case Study of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation Program at the University of Rwanda.**

2. I have been asked to participate in a 4-5 week research project, which is designed to examine the vision faculty members, administrators, and students in the M.A. program have for how it might contribute to Rwandan peace and stability, uncover strategies used by stakeholders in the program to implement and improve it, and provide lessons for other peace education programs.

3. It has been explained to me that the reason for my inclusion in this project is that I am a stakeholder (i.e., faculty member, administrator, student) in the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program at the University of Rwanda and/or am in a unique position to offer insight into its development or context.

4. I understand that if I am a participant, I will be taking part in an interview or focus group of approximately one hour. The investigator will ask questions designed to explore your perspective on the above themes as they relate to the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program at the University of Rwanda.

5. I understand that if I am a participant, and consent to be interviewed or part of a focus group, I will be videotaped, audiotaped and/or photographed in the process of these research procedures. It has been explained to me that these tapes will be used for teaching and/or research purposes only. I understand that I have the right to review the tapes made as part of the study to determine whether they should be edited or erased in whole or in part. These procedures have been explained to me by Sarah M. Doerrer, Ed.D. candidate.

6. I understand that the study described above may involve the following minimal risks and/or discomforts: (voluntary) discussion of sensitive topics regarding parts of Rwanda's past that catalyzed the creation of the M.A. program and possible discomfort of sharing negative feedback about the M.A. program, if applicable.

7. I also understand that the possible benefits of the study are the opportunity to reflect on the M.A. program from a multitude of perspectives, to share these insights with other stakeholders in the program, and to offer best practices for other peace education programs around the world that will see UR's M.A. program as a model. Additionally, the ultimate dissemination of these results may result in greater publicity in academic and funding circles, both for the program itself and for its leadership.

8. I understand that I must be 18 years of age or older to participate in this study.

9. If the study design or the use of the information is to be changed, I will be so informed, and my consent re-obtained.

10. I understand that I have the right to refuse to participate in, or to withdraw from this research at any time without prejudice to my standing in the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation program.

11. I understand that circumstances may arise which might cause the investigator to terminate my participation before the completion of the study.

12. I understand that no information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent except as specifically required by law.

13. I understand that I have the right to refuse to answer any question that I may not wish to answer.

14. I understand that I will receive no compensation, monetary or otherwise, for participation in this study.

15. I understand that in the unlikely event of research-related injury, neither compensation nor medical treatment are provided by Loyola Marymount University.

16. In signing this consent form, I acknowledge receipt of a copy of both the informed consent form, and the "Subject's Bill of Rights".

17. I understand that if I have any further questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may contact:
    - Sarah M. Doerrer, Principal Investigator and Ed.D. candidate, Loyola Marymount University, 1 LMU Drive—Doctoral Center (Ste. 2348), Los Angeles, CA 90045-2659; +1-301-814-0682; sdoerrer@lion.lmu.edu
    - David Hardy, Ph.D. Chair, Institutional Review Board, Loyola Marymount University, 1 LMU Drive, Ste. 3000, Los Angeles CA 90045-2659 (310) 258-5465, david.hardy@lmu.edu.

Subject's Signature _____ Date _____

Witness_____ Date_____

APPENDIX C

CONFIDENTIALITY WAIVER CONFIRMING PERMISSION TO USE NAME

LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

Informed Consent Form: Use of Name

Date of Preparation: January 10, 2017

Loyola Marymount University
Protocol Number: LMU IRB 2017 SP 42

Impact, Implementation, and Insights of Peace Education: A Case Study of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation Program at the University of Rwanda

1. I hereby authorize Sarah M. Doerrer, Ed.D. candidate to include me in the following research study: **Impact, Implementation, and Insights of Peace Education: A Case Study of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation Program at the University of Rwanda.**

2. I do not wish my identity to remain anonymous and confidential and I authorize Sarah M. Doerrer to use my actual name in any public presentations and publications.

3. In signing this consent form, I acknowledge receipt of a copy of both the informed consent form, and the "Experimental Subject's Bill of Rights".

Subject's Signature _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

APPENDIX D

EXPERIMENTAL SUBJECTS BILL OF RIGHTS

Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code §24172, I understand that I have the following rights as a participant in a research study:

1. I will be informed of the nature and purpose of the experiment.

2. I will be given an explanation of the procedures to be followed in the medical experiment, and any drug or device to be utilized.

3. I will be given a description of any attendant discomforts and risks to be reasonably expected from the study.

4. I will be given an explanation of any benefits to be expected from the study, if applicable.

5. I will be given a disclosure of any appropriate alternative procedures, drugs or devices that might be advantageous and their relative risks and benefits.

6. I will be informed of the avenues of medical treatment, if any, available after the study is completed if complications should arise.

7. I will be given an opportunity to ask any questions concerning the study or the procedures involved.

8. I will be instructed that consent to participate in the research study may be withdrawn at any time and that I may discontinue participation in the study without prejudice to me.

9. I will be given a copy of the signed and dated written consent form.

10. I will be given the opportunity to decide to consent or not to consent to the study without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, coercion, or undue influence on my decision.

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Impact, Implementation, and Insights of Peace Education:

A Case Study of the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation Program

at the University of Rwanda

Thank you for taking this time to participate in this interview. Before we begin, I would like to take some time to review the procedures we will follow as we talk.

As we have discussed, all responses will be recorded using an audio recorder, as well as thorough note taking. Your responses, as well as your name or other identifiable information will remain confidential unless you have specified that you prefer otherwise. If you are not comfortable during any portion of this interview you may withdraw at any time and may decline to answer any question you wish. Please answer honestly and to the best of your ability. I would like to acknowledge that there is no right or wrong answer to any question.

Although I have a list of questions to work from, it is my sincere hope that in my conversations with you and others, I will tell the story of the M.A. program based on what all of you think is most important. So, although these questions can be prompts for our discussion, please feel free to share openly on anything that feels important to you as we talk. Ultimately, I plan to defer to you on what topics are most relevant.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask at this time, as we are now about to proceed.

Interview Questions

A. Demographic Information and Opinions

1. What is your connection to the University of Rwanda?
2. Please describe yourself in your own words (age, family background, educational history, et cetera).
3. What do you personally hope to gain from being part of the M.A. program?
4. What excites you most about the M.A. program?
5. What influenced your decision to become involved with the M.A. program?
6. Has your own perspective or worldview changed as a result of your involvement with the M.A. program?

B. Research Question 1—Discourse Theme 1: IMPACT (Intended and Actual)

7. What critical themes or issues did the developers of the M.A. program believe needed to be included?
8. What values and skills does the M.A. program seek to instill in its students?
9. How do you envision the role of the M.A. program in preparing leaders to embrace their role as advocates for social justice?
10. How does the M.A. program prepare leaders to engage ethically and effectively with communities?
11. Does the M.A. program have a coherent mission and vision? Is program leadership in agreement about these goals?
12. Were there other peace education programs from which the M.A. program drew inspiration in its development and conception?

C. Research Question 2—Discourse Theme 2: IMPLEMENTATION

13. What circumstances led to the development of the program?
14. Who was involved in its conception and design?
15. What has been the role of partnerships between the M.A. program and other UR programs/centres, or between the M.A. program and other institutions or organizations? Do you see these partnerships as adding value to the program?
16. What are the backgrounds of the students accepted into the M.A. program (i.e., military, politics, law, policy, development, education, science, theology, et cetera)?
17. Do you feel the students who have been part of the M.A. program thus far represent an accurate cross-section of the Rwandan population at large? Why or why not?
18. Similarly, do you feel the M.A. program is taking measures to achieve gender parity among its students and faculty members?
19. How well do you feel differences of opinion are tolerated within the M.A. program community?
20. How does program leadership settle differences of opinion about various decisions?

D. Research Question 3—Discourse Theme 3: INSIGHTS

21. Overall, do you feel the M.A. program is succeeding in meeting its goals? Why or why not?
22. Do you have any thoughts on how the M.A. program could be better?
23. In your opinion, what makes the M.A. program special?
24. Is there anything you think people outside Rwanda misunderstand about Rwanda? What would you like them to understand as they learn more about the M.A. program and the Rwandan context it exists in?

APPENDIX F

ILLUSTRATIVE STORIES FROM STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Story #1: Hiding as "Accomplices"

"People who were politically supporting the RPF? Maybe those could be put in jail [as] accomplices, yes! Anyway, my family was also on the list of accomplices [because] we were not supporting the RPF. <*laughs*> We didn't know [about the genocide to come]! We only knew that the accomplices would be put in jail. . . . We were [often] arrested, all the time arrested. We go explain, we go back home! . . . We were used to that. We thought it would continue like that. . . . We would have fled, actually—It was a surprise, yeah. . . . We knew things but were not aware that this would turn into something else. . . . The Genocide started on the 6th—the night of the 6th, in April 1994. We stayed where we fled the same night. Even though we were caught—I was caught. . . . I was staying near Nyamirambo [a sector in Nyarugenge District west of Kigali City Center], not far from here. In Upper Town, that's where I was staying—and I was a student at secondary school. . . . But at that time, we were on holiday, so I was home. So, when everything took place, I was here. The way I survived, it's a miracle, a very long story." (CCM Faculty G, S. P.)

Story #2: Subtle and Not-So-Subtle Pressure to Conform

"Another example. I spoke with a policeman, a high-ranking officer, and we were discussing. And then, I realized I was reading in his affairs that he was frustrated, that he was not happy. Then I told him, just because I was supervising him [as my student] and we were sitting somewhere, so I just threw the ball to him and said, 'why did you change the Constitution?' Because I had read that he's not bad. He was a good guy—he was not happy with what is going on. I had read it, actually, then we were discussing. . . . The current debate over whether to change the Constitution to allow the President to stay in power. So, I asked him, 'why did we change the Constitution?' The President himself—and this is recorded, on [public video sites]; you can find it! It is well-recorded. He said it—'I have been in power for two mandates. I am not so stupid as to go for a change in the Constitution and to remain in power.' It is recorded. On [social media], it's there. That is why I was asking him, 'why did you change your minds?' 'You' means you, the military, and the President. 'Why did you change your mind and are now requesting that people change the Constitution? And you are lying that this is people who want it to be changed. That they petitioned.' . . . No, no, no, we are not good people. We—human beings. <*both laugh*> But for those who are in power, for men who have positions—good positions—of course, they don't want to leave their positions! . . . Imagine the country, where we have still 50 or 60% of people who are illiterate, who don't know how to read and write. Then you realize, who printed out those forms on which they signed, or they put their thumb? We are here; we were here. If we are seated here, you can't lie and tell me that it is raining. I am here—I see it is not raining. We were the ones sent to go to tell people. Of course, I had to. . . . That's what you have to understand. If you have lost your parents—not even talking about others—myself, I was a Ph.D., a university lecturer for 15 years who can't even talk to my room. <*laughs*>. . . . If you are a university lecturer who cannot stand, at least in the classroom, and speak to students [honestly], come on! . . . If I can't dare, how do you want peasants to say [anything]? Well, why do I say so? If somebody says things, he is shot. . . . People have suffered a lot. People have lost their parents. People have seen their relatives killed or buried alive by the RPF. So, now you are the only one remaining, or two. And you know if you say something, something bad will happen to you, too. And you saw people who are bodyguards, who were drivers of the President, now suffering in jail. And many of them have died. Those people who fought with him died. And you never fought. You are just a person—what will happen to you? . . . Yeah! You just sign. It's like if, for instance, they come to me right now—the guys, they catch me, and they say, 'we are going to put you in jail. But, for you, just accept that you killed people, that you betrayed the Government, accept! Otherwise, we'll kill you!' For me, I will tell them, 'no, no, no, don't ask me little things! I accept before you even ask me things to accept.' Because I know if I don't say so, they torture me. And if I accept before, just write, then I say, 'write what you want, I'll sign', because I know what is going to happen to me. So, people have experience of these things. . . . But I must tell you—it's not easy. I must tell you that: this big man is very, very smart. Very smart. He is a well-trained guy, in spying and everything. How smart is he? I get to know the extent from these guys, who we teach in

the military. Some of them become our friends; they tell us things. Because they think we are together. It's like we are sitting here, but actually, I am spying on you. But actually, I don't know that you are also spying on me! <*laughs*> That's how it is. . . . Now, a person who is in jail now, he is the boss, the Chief of his bodyguards. Can you imagine? The Chief of your bodyguards, he is supposed to be the big man! . . . Because of just a sentence he spoke in the bar, like [how] we are seated here. . . . He only said, 'how far shall we continue killing people?' Only that sentence. . . . You don't know, of course. There are so many things happening. Changing the Constitution, saying it's [because] people petitioned. It's not. Now we are approaching the election in August, the national election. Can you imagine, all the political parties—of course, each gives its candidates, right? Candidates, candidates, candidates…[Yet] all the political parties say it: 'Our candidate is Kagame', although the political parties are not RPF. How come you say your candidate is that person, when he is not even in your political party, and even before his political party appoints him? That's what you call fear." (CCM Faculty G, S. P.)

Story #3: Protecting One's Family

"I even got married. I have a wife and two children. Then I told my wife, 'you see what is happening'. We are Christian, actually. And I tell her, 'I lost my entire family, you lost your family. The only family I have is you and our children. Please go to study, [overseas]. Study.' Yeah, because I don't want to lose them. I can die. Yes, I'm ready. But I don't want to lose them, and I have to come back and work. Because I'm the one financing them, giving them money. So, if I don't come back and work, they won't get money. So, that is why I'm here. See? . . . I even have a U.S. visa. Five years [but only] for me. But it's useless. [As for seeking asylum] mmm, yeah—that's also not easy. You can prove, you can explain how we feel. And you are back. And immediately—I know what will happen, what will happen to me. For me, no problem. I can die. I think I'm ready. But I see my wife and my children there and how good they are. . . . Because when I came back, I'm teaching, even in the military, leadership courses, peace, all these theories. And when you teach people, you supervise them scientifically, [and] they sometimes mess up and reveal things that you do not know. I also teach a master's [for the] police, you know? . . . Security [Studies] for the military, Peace Studies for the police. So, when you teach, you become some kind of friends with people, [so] they know you are a survivor. And when they know you are a survivor, that is how they are not suspicious much about you. They reveal things. But this means that even the people who are hired, in Sweden—so many countries!—people who go to seek for asylum, [they are tracked]. They track them, even though generally, they have papers. They go to seek for asylum, they explain, they show papers. Then they are denied. And the day they are denied, that is the same day they are deported. And since I know there are people who are sent here and there—I'm not sure that's everywhere—but I said, 'wow! What is this?' Then I told my wife, 'don't worry. But godspeed, I will stay.' But I can't join politics. I can't kill people. And once you are there, you are assigned. If you go into RPF, you are assigned. You are a foreigner and an American. For instance, now you go to the President's Office or whatever. You tell them, 'I want to write about Rwanda. How Rwanda is beautiful. A-B-C-D, good things! I need money.' They will give you a lot of money! To publicize, [good] publicity, yeah. People are paid, journalists are paid, people are paid—well-paid! Yeah. But they have to believe in you first! <*laughs*> They have to know . . . because even this lady who produced a movie and told a story, she came like you! Just watching, doing her research. She shot at the [Hotel] Mille Collines; she walked around, spoke to people. Some people—they hide information, [but] she tried to talk to people, then she produced a movie. From that, I don't believe anyone. So, I even came to Washington [DC], I came to Philadelphia, people were telling me to stay. Yes, I can stay. I can stay. . . . [But then] I'm deported. Then I die. It's okay. But the point is my family. . . . They can invent [a crime I have committed]! Of course, they cannot say that I killed people [during the Genocide], because I am a survivor. I think that one, they cannot do. But they can say, 'he fled the country. He never paid taxes', as an example. But I think they can do so when you go out, then you start talking. Being against the Government. And that I cannot do. Because I'm not into it. I'm not there to insult [Paul] Kagame; be he a bad person or not, that's not my business. So, I cannot insult him. But maybe those people who go out, then they start talking, and blogging, and everything—maybe they are the ones whom they pursue. But for me, that is why I don't leave. I know the guys. . . . The reason why I don't leave is because of my family. Yeah. . . . My family is very worried, actually. All the time. For instance, I don't use WhatsApp, I don't use [social media]. No. You never know. . . . But when we talk, we only speak in codes. We don't talk about [many] things: 'How are you? Did you eat?' 'Yes, I ate.' 'Did you eat banana?' 'Banana' means 'are you okay?' No problems, that's 'eat banana'. We have our codes. . . . But I'm more worried about this—because I'm not active! I'm not active, and they

don't see me in RPF. They have *itorero*, this gathering where everybody goes, but I don't go. . . . Praise God, because I'm not in it. I'm fighting, hidden—I'm hiding. Hiding means that all of us, we are obliged to be in the RPF. We are obliged, all of us, including myself. Nobody knows that I'm not in it. . . . Nobody knows, [unless] they discover it—not only in RPF, in any political party…. And I would not! Because my parents told me, 'don't do that' before they died, before they were killed in the Genocide. 'Don't get into politics.' I was very young, very young! Of course, in high school, I kept that [promise], so I would never do that, to obey my parents. They told me these things are bad, to get into politics. Actually, it's good. But the problem is, you would turn into somebody else who lies, who kills. And so, I'm realizing that they were not wrong. That is why I am not in it. It's a personal reason, right? It's not because I hate this political party. No, no, no! No need to hate. . . . But they will know when we look at your pay—your salary pay. Because we pay for [party membership]. There is money going to the Social Security, to taxes, to the RPF. . . . I think when they discover that there's not that line, as far as my pay . . . <*chuckles*>." (CCM Faculty G, S. P.)

Story #4: Reflecting on National Interest

"Maybe one day, when I get the time—not here, of course—I have the title of the book. One day I'll write it, if I will be alive. It is *The Republic of Terror*. It is not a dictatorship; it is beyond that. And nobody knows. I mean, the international community—I think *they* know. But there are political interests, which are behind. You see? The West, even the U.S., they know. And I understand politics. The U.S. is the U.S.! The U.S. is not Africa. The U.S. is not Rwanda. And the mission of President Trump, I understand him. 'I want the U.S. to be great.' He has no mission to make Rwanda great, or Africa. If he does good for Africa, it's okay. But that's not his mission. So, his mission for the U.S. —I understand him—he must focus on the U.S., and when he is dealing with Rwanda, or Africa, he is dealing in a way that makes the U.S. prosper. I allow him not to know what is happening here, because it is not his country. So, for me, for him being the President, the only thing I see is whether the President is helping the U.S. to move forward. But, if he's against the interests of the U.S., we remove him. But as long as he's good for our interests, they forget what is happening down country, right? So, I know that they know." (CCM Faculty G, S. P.)

Story #5: The Suppression of Civil War Victimhood

"I could remember, when we were at the University after the Genocide, they were saying that Genocide survivors [should stand]—they wanted their names to give them some money [like] a scholarship, or to help them, because they are not only survivors, but also orphans. Then I could see other people seated—these are *Hutu*s, for instance—I could see them seated. And some of them were saying, 'I remember that picture. But we are also orphans', because they were orphans also. [But they were told], 'no, no, no, you sit down—you're not orphans!' What is an orphan? An orphan is somebody who lost parents, at least one—but parents! We were lost, because we had lost our parents. So, they have to see it, because they have parents. They're not orphans. While the[se others had] lost their parents, too. Killed by the RPF. For them, they have to see it; for us, we have to [unclear word]—what is that? And to tell them, 'you're not orphans', which means they have parents, while you know they don't have parents, while you know that you are the one who killed their parents—do you see how this is traumatizing? What kind of peace are we teaching? If we say, 'orphans, raise', they [should] raise! If you don't want to know who killed their parents, okay. But at least you support them as orphans. But if you insist, 'you are not orphans', no! Come on! . . . That's what I see. Which means now orphans of the Civil War are refraining from saying that they are orphans of RPF killings. They are there. They are not supported. They can't bury theirs. They can't mourn. They can't even speak it out. You ask them, 'where are you going?' [They say], 'I'm going to see my parents.' He or she doesn't have parents. He is lying. Since I studied peace, now I understand that kind of trauma. Imagine. . . . You did not kill your parents. Somebody killed your parents. That somebody is in power, and you are trying to hide from that person that you don't have parents. Don't you see how traumatizing that is? Hiding it—like you're ashamed! Ashamed that he killed your parents." (CCM Faculty G, S. P.)

Story #6: The Dilemma of Sharing the Genocide with Children

"A friend of mine who told me, for example, 'you know, what should we be telling our children about genocide?' It's a very big challenge, because some people—or maybe the large majority of Rwandans, they do not know how to talk about genocide while addressing children. And with this risk of maybe telling things that are interpreted or understood as denying the Genocide, for example. There is no official version, and we do not know where the version will come from about how, even me, like as a researcher with maybe a high academic profile, it's hard. Sometimes some questions remain tricky when our daughters ask questions. The first-born is now twelve, the second is eight, and the last-born is almost two years [old]. When they ask questions, of course, I wouldn't tell them that I don't know, but I'm not very sure whether what I tell them is what I should be telling them, or I sometimes wonder whether what I think I should be telling them should be really audible to them, depending on their age." (CSO Leader C, S. P.)

Story #7: Healing for Returned Refugees

"The important thing is to [think about] this and reflect deeply [on] the dilemma, which is there, and we are the first generation, everyone knows the reality—how it came—but at the same time, a few weeks ago, I organized a conversation on refugee phenomena. I don't know if I shared this experience [with you yet]. . . . And the premise was [explor]ing, 'what kind of remembrances are they transmitting to [the] young[er] generation?' And I took one case, and some Government officials say, 'are you integrating this narrative also—the one who fled the country in '94 to Congo bushes?' . . . If you want to understand and to deconstruct the ideology of genocide or the argument of double genocide, you should understand those narratives, and so we gave to him the floor. And my question to him was, 'tell me, from the one point to the last point you have come back to the country, how has your family has been dispersed?' And he said, 'ah, my mother came back in '94 immediately, my father came back later on, I stayed in the bush', and so on. 'I go up to North Congo and to Gabon, then they took us back to Rwanda.' 'Try to explain to me, what are the narratives, the transmission of narratives?' 'No, no, we had this kind of—we define *Tutsi* like this, we define Kagame like this, we define people of Rwanda, those who are going back to Rwanda', and so on, and so on. Rwanda, to describe Rwanda today. So, he was saying, 'everything was put in my head and I was convinced that this was reality—that my family was killed, that everybody was killed, that in Rwanda, no *Hutu* can live there', and so on. But he said, 'when I came back and they told me, 'you are meeting now the soldiers from the RPF', and the narrative I had heard was that it was just a [situation created so that I was] to be killed, [so] the first time when I arrived, they told me I have to go from the Training Centre Camp for Civic Education . . . to go to visit my family. I said [to myself], 'this is my last day of life.'' So, [he really thought], 'I'm going to be killed.' And when on the hill, he met all the family at the same hill, then he said, 'this was my first day to [share] out now everything I have learnt from this.' It is very important to listen to the narratives. . . . He didn't trust the Government when he saw the first soldier; he didn't trust the Government when he [went] to solidarity camps [otherwise known as *ingando*] to be educated, but when he [went] back to visit and [then] back to the Centre before he ended, he said, 'the day when I was converted and when I tried to reflect is when I saw my mother and my father, I say ah, no!' So, he [went] back to the camp and completed [his time there]. Now he is ending his master's studies, and he is a pastor!" (UR Administrator H, S. P.)

Story #8: Messiness of the Gacaca Courts

"Yeah, I met [my perpetrators] in person. Of course, during the *gacaca* courts, we met those people who killed our parents and our relatives, because they had to appear before the audience. Either confessing or just being tried. Before the *gacaca* audience. So, they would even at the time still [sometimes make] bad speeches. That also affects the survivors. And I remember one person who was telling me that I would say sorry for him and apologize on his behalf, just to get a reduced punishment, just for the sake of the fact that he kidnapped me during the Genocide, coming to take things, property from our home, and then he took me in that mob. Not by being kind to me, saying that I'm going to raise this kid of three years, just for the sake of mistreating me throughout that process. And then he was doing that, just with the intention of reminding me of the situation, not for showing me how a good person he is but trying to take me back to that situation. Just to remember it. . . . And then, of course, there were some cases which were not accomplished; they were still ongoing and there was no specific court to take care of them. So, we

had to take those claims to the normal courts, especially cases relating to properties taken during the Genocide. Because we've already closed the *gacaca* courts—I don't remember well the year, but I think between 2010 and 2013. Yeah, they were closed. . . . And my case was about our land and our properties, which were taken, and no one was paying it. And especially there was a house, and we knew the person who had it, and we wanted to have it back. But it was kind of impossible considering the person who had it, who was financially stable, who could give corruption or bribe the leaders not to enter in that case and solve it." (CSO Leader H, S. P.)

Story #9: Memorable Ways to Teach Peace

"I mean, one powerful tool. . . . Have you ever thought about how the word 'listen' spelled another way is 'silent'? . . . Very important in conflict resolution and negotiation. Then spelled a third way is 'enlist'. . . . So, imagine an exercise where your first day in a class with kids, you go, 'listen spelled another way is silent. I don't know you guys, if your first name begins with 'A', your first name begins with 'Z', perfect alphabetical order, 30 seconds, go.'" (CSO Leader B, S. P.)

Story #10: The Danger of Neglecting Privilege and Context

"When I worked at the College, there was a certain American faculty who refused to work in the offices that my [Rwandan] staff were working in, saying, 'I can't possibly work in this environment'. And, you know, that may be the case, and everybody is different. But that was quite a damaging thing to keep saying out loud to people, who have been productively working in that environment. So, I think there is a lot of stuff, and you know, it's not that we are 'right'! I will go open into an office in UCLA [University of California Los Angeles] and think, 'Crikey! I can't do this!', you know? So, you know, it's a process and you also take constructs like that that come from a North American perspective sometimes and, you know, they don't always fit. You know, the North American construct about teamwork – forming, norming, storming and performing <*some laughter*>—and then mourning when the team breaks up, it doesn't fit into the North European perspective, because they don't perform and then norm in the European context. They norm and then form, in that you just have to consider sitting with a group of American academics in the States and sitting with a group of British academics in the U.K. . . . American academics—you know, if we're allowed to generalize and be terribly stereotypical—would kind of say, 'I'm a Professor of such-and-such, and I have 20 years of experience, and I'm one of the highest publishers in the world. I have one of the highest rates in publishing in the world.' And then in the U.K., you get somebody saying, 'my name is Sarah, I'm a Professor at the University', and move on! You know? So, there is that kind of importing even thinking tools to try and move things forward, but it doesn't always work unless you do this stuff, which is to understand the fundamental heart of everything you do, which is to understand the context." (UR Administrator A, S. P.)

Story #11: Why People Kill Versus Heal

"Here we have conflicts of different types. People kill because of land issues, people kill because—like the other day, someone was saying, 'I was supposed to come from here, and I was supposed to kill 10 people.' They said it this year, in this mourning period. Someone, he was arrested—he was spreading that ideology. He killed someone, and when he was with the police, he reconfessed that he was planning to kill 10 [more] people from there. So, then you ask yourself, even if its land, a father killing a son, a son killing dad and mum, sisters and brothers, husband and wife. . . . Every other day there is this: so-and-so killed somebody; we have found a dead body in a trench somewhere. It's not many—it's not common, [but] it shouldn't happen anyway. Nobody is supposed to be killed, even if it is—so long as you are a human being, even if it's an animal anyway. So, you find that, 'what is this now? . . .' So, myself I always ask people. Then, people say they were fighting [about] land, that you are doing what? So, I try to analyze it, and tell them that, 'now if you don't have land, or you have a conflict over land and you kill someone, would that solve an issue or [will] you complicate it more?' Because you will go to courts, [and] they will know the land is definitely—maybe if it is the only one. But still, it may not belong to you, because you have killed the person who had the land title and all that—how will it come to you? So, you find there is something hidden behind [most conflicts], and more especially in [the vein] of emotional, psychological well-being. You know, the

anger—the abnormal anger—the abnormal thinking and hatred, sort of. You know, sort of people losing humanity. There is no longer human[ity] in people. If my father died, or so-and-so I have killed, they even talk like this, 'I have killed more than many people—and just one person is nothing.' So, you find there is that way of dehumanizing people, so you think there is a way of approach, to more sensitization, which is critical for people to know how to behave, and also to do their own Counseling. Maybe in a way, there are simple things you can follow to help yourself to release the anger, to reduce your anxiety, the grief, and all that. . . . Let it be those, say the rebels, for example—if you go to Sudan, if you go to Northern Uganda, the Konys and all that, how can someone go take young children and take women and marry I don't know what—like young girls, this one and that one and that one, is that normal? So, you find there is a way of, even if you go to the ICC [International Criminal Court], or even if you arrest them, it can't [completely resolve] things. So, you find, even if it's a GBV [gender-based violence] case, there [remains] violence. If you treat the perpetrator and just take him to prison, yes, they can serve the sentence, but psychologically, how are they? They can come back and do the same thing! You find there is a lot of recidivism, sometimes because of those psychological issues, yeah!" (Alumna A, S. P.)

Story #12: Demonstrating Servant Leadership

"My mother died recently. And I went to see senior people for meetings who would say, 'oh, don't say anything, let me just give you a hug, I've heard about your mother.' You know, if people value you to that extent, I think they get the best out of you. You know, at Loyola Marymount University, wherever! And it does say that it's a faith-based institution, so you better get on and demonstrate that, you know? And if there are people, you know, who use management styles and approaches that are inconsistent with the management style and approach of Jesus Christ, if it's a faith-based institution, then they better get out, you know? . . . But I learnt it from my patients very early on, you know, I remember getting a letter from a woman who said to me, 'thank you for everything you've done for me. I'm now on the other side of my darkness.' This was an episode of depression. And I thought, 'goodness sake! I can't remember that I did anything for her!' And I got the Receptionist to pull out the case notes, and over an 18-month period, I had seen her many times and simply had long chats, you know, 40 minutes. But when I met her and spoke to her sometime afterwards, she said, 'you know, you listened to me. That's all you did, you listened to me.' I listened to some students who came to see me the other week and I knew why they were coming, and I was partly feeling, you know, 'I feel so helpless and hopeless because I can't do anything about this situation.' And at the end of listening, I said, 'what would you like me to do for you?''—in an openhearted way, not a critical way. They said, 'we would like you to pray for us.' . . . So, I said, 'now?' And they said, 'yeah!'" (UR Administrator A, S. P.)

Story #13: When Policy Outpaces Public Sentiment

"This is for example. Let me give you examples, some policies they bring. For example, we had grass thatched, how do we call it, houses with grass roofs. . . . But then the Government was like, 'guys, we need to move on. Let's stop living in these houses.' It sounds like force, right? People were like, 'no, no, no, why do you force people to live in sheet-roofed houses?' People were like, 'that is being a dictatorship.' But then the Government was like, 'let's stop it, let's completely stop living in such houses, they are so bad. They can [catch] fire anytime, because it's grass and they are not good—we should move ahead.' Some people who were outside the country were like, 'that's being a dictator! Why should they decide how you should live and which house you should live in?' And this was for a positive cause—it was for a positive cause. Actually, eventually, the Government was giving people money to buy iron sheets, and no one now in this country has such a house. They were bad houses, to be honest. It's the poorest condition you would ever live in. But I would say that's being a positive dictator. I would say it's a positive dictatorship, like someone is trying to tell a kid, 'do this', and the kid is like, 'no!' And you are like, 'do it'. You are trying to make—it's for a good cause, you know? So, such things might happen, whereby there is a policy which is coming in place, and we are obliged to obey that policy. But because it's a good policy! To be honest, if it was a bad policy, people would resist." (CSO Leader F, S. P.)

Story #14: Women Leading the Way in Reconciliation

"I can give you one example to show you how they changed, because the first meeting was done in Bujumbura, [Burundi], and it was a matter of bringing women from Rwanda, Burundi and Congo together just to initiate, to launch the project, and train them on social cohesion. Some of them gave interesting testimonies, sharing their stories of how they felt the first night. Most of them couldn't sleep, because some of them were all in one room, one hotel and they feared, 'one lady from that country will come to kill me…' Yes, they didn't sleep. And they are frankly sharing this kind of transformation [where they say], 'the person I was fearing is now my best friend. We do trade together. We do exchange merchandise on credit. She can come and take the product she wants, and she will bring me the money after; I trust her honesty, whereas before I didn't even think I could be able to sit next to her.'" (CSO Leader G, S. P.)

Story #15: Powerful Exercises in Critical Thinking

"I remember in a training—we had this training for peace education—there was an instance with an exercise whereby we walked behind a leader—his eyes were open, [but] he told us to close our eyes, the rest of us, when we were in groups. And the whole of us behind him were closing our eyes, and then the leader tells us to freeze, 'can you guys pick up things? Do this funny stuff . . .'And maybe the things he is telling you to pick up are not even there. Not even there! Can you pick up a bowl? And you're blind, so you pick up nothing. Lack of critical thinking, there is so much harm in it. . . . Once a facilitator told [each of] us to draw something every person likes. 'If you love like an apple, just draw it on the paper. If you love a phone, just draw a phone on the paper. If you love your wife or husband or your boyfriend or girlfriend, just try to draw something near to him or her.' And then the facilitator suggested that we can exchange our papers—I give you mine, you give me yours, I give this to the other colleague, and making sure that no one remains with his or her own paper. And then he suggested, 'can everyone destroy the paper that she is having, or he is having?' Everyone, everyone destroys the paper. I remained with mine. The one I got from the colleague <*some laughter*> and the lecturer asked me, 'why did you not destroy the paper?' And I was like 'this thing was drawn by this colleague, and it's the thing he loves. How can you destroy this?' Let's assume this is his wife, and you are telling us to destroy these papers containing the images of the things we really love. How come I destroy this thing that this colleague loves this so much? And he was like, 'this was the main lesson of today.' By killing someone, by killing a parent, you are not thinking of the kids that were calling this man 'Dad', that were calling him 'Uncle', that were calling him 'Grandfather'. You are not considering that. But maybe if it would happen to you, consider a situation when you lose a family member. You cry, you feel oppressed, you feel like nothing is good on earth. But for you, taking the first step killing your neighbor, you are not caring whether there will be someone who will feel the same as you would be if you would lose." (CSO Leaders F & H, S. P.s)

Story #16: The Paramount Importance of Peace Education

"I will give you another example from one of the high-ranking people in education; she was a teacher in 1994. And she was a *Tutsi* at that time—of course, she still is. And it so happened that when her family was attacked, as she was trying to hide and find a place to run away, when she turned a little, she saw that the people who were following her who wanted to kill her were her own students! Kids that she taught. So, she continued running, and then when she got to a place where she was safe, she was like, 'what did we teach these kids? What did we teach them? Mathematics? What did I give them? Because if they can run after me, what is it that I gave them?' So, she was giving us the testimony—she was like, 'that time I got really challenged! I [realized that] these kids, we taught them mathematics, we taught them geography, everything, but we didn't give them values—we didn't talk about peace. That's why they can run after their own teacher.' Their own teacher, they want to kill their own teacher! So, she felt like, 'I'm partly to blame'. So, she was part of the people who were to decide whether peace education should be in the curriculum, and she knew the story. She was telling us that." (CSO Leader D, S. P.)

Story #17: A Foreign Researcher's Path to Deep Rwandan Involvement

"So, I first got involved in Rwanda when I was [in graduate school], [but] I had come out of another Fulbright. . . . I was deciding between going to Sierra Leone with World Food Program, and going to Liberia with Search for Common Ground, and going to Rwanda. . . . So, I went back twice with that position with Aegis Trust as a Consultant for the Department of Research, Policy and Higher Education. I went back for the 20th Commemoration in April and again in June—that was 2014. Then, I was able to use funding from my Ph.D. program to go back in other instances in 2015. I had a position, and I was hired to be a Community Consultant for the Nyamata Preservation Project with the Ambassador for Cultural Preservation. So, that was a paid position, a short-term consultancy that I got hired to go back [for]. I did some grantwriting for Never Again Rwanda. I serve on the Board of Survivors Fund, or SURF. So, those all facilitated both monetarily and opportunity-wise to be able to go back so much. And throughout that time, I was doing pilot research, kind of waiting for the fellowship year to come, for the dissertation. . . . I came right out of [my master's] and went to [my Ph.D. program], for a number of different reasons. But yes, I knew I wanted to continue this work and [my school] had assured me that they could support me in this research. . . . You know, my dissertation focuses on memory as a form of justice and individuals engaging in memorial sites, and kind of [going] beyond the punishment of perpetrators to see what people are seeking in terms of feeling that justice has been rendered in some way. So, that's really what my research deals with, but my community work goes so much broader." (CSO Leader E, S. P.)

Story #18: Stories of Refugees Highlight the Need for Many Narratives

"My dream, my vision, is to one day have a platform or authority or power to help refugees…Like help out refugees in terms of getting them into schools…That's my biggest concern. That's why I live. To be honest with you, I don't like—well, I want to study law and maybe I can be like a lecturer—but the overall aim will be getting more voice, getting more influence to help out and to advocate for the rights of refugees and asylum seekers. . . . That's why when I was writing my book about the refugee situation—my refugee situation and my story, I was also concerned. I was like, 'really? I just know a single story, my own story! How about if I find out more stories of other refugees? Maybe we went through a different experience.' And when I applied for a permit to go and talk to many refugees in Rwanda from Burundi, and from Congo—because we had different backgrounds, I want[ed] to see if we had the same exodus. Did we really have the same exodus? And then I was like, 'why did you guys leave your country? How do you feel being here in Rwanda? What do you think of the future?' Trying to capture all the tenses—past, present and future. 'How do you move, how do you feel being here, how do you feel people are treating you? The communities around you? And what do you feel about the future? Did you feel you overcame this and became people of dignity again and have nationality and [will] go back to your country?' You know, 'I know you are here because of violence in your countries—would you maybe use violence one day against them and go back?' And, you know, all this stuff. Because we had a unique experience. We were chased out of this country. And we had to force ourselves back to this country, because everything had failed. So, our fathers and others had to force themselves back, because they had failed; they were always asking the President to come back here and he did not [allow it]—[he said] the country is full. He could say, 'the country is full like a glass of water.'—I'm quoting him—which means that when you come in, some water will be poured, some water will just spill out. The President back then. Not him. Actually, he was telling [Kagame] and others, you see what I mean? So, I was trying to compare. Do these people have feelings that their country can't have them again? Do they have also feelings or plans of 'maybe one day', maybe the young generation? Because even in our situation, the people who actually fled out of this country didn't come back. These people who were born out of this country actually planned to invade back, to come back. You see?" (CSO Leader F, S. P.)

Story #19: Trust in Authority Figures as Evidence of Peace

"Of course, the police and the army are the best friends we have [now]. . . . You can be scared of your neighbor, and your friend is the military guy standing around the road or a police officer who is just there moving around. Because even my second-born is a kid of seven and a half years, [and he] was telling me how they were moving with my house helper, and they were in Town, and wanted to cross [the street], and my house helper was so scared. The boy knew how to look at the traffic lights, and knew where the zebra crossing is, but the house helper was so scared

[and] not used to that and . . . well, they stayed there for a long time without crossing. And the boy saw that because [she] is bigger and [he] did not want to resist and maybe do it by himself, owing to that kind of respect he reserves for the house helper, so what he did, he raised his hand and called the police [officer] who was in the middle of the road, and said, 'excuse me, sir, would you please come over and I tell you something?' And the police officer came and knelt down, and wanted to hear from the boy, and the boy told him, 'we've been here for quite some time, and my aunt here, she is scared of crossing the road. Can you help us cross the road?' The police officer was happy to do that, and helped them cross the road, and he said—now he was narrating the story to me—when they came back home he said, 'do you know, Dad, we went there, and I saw we couldn't get away and I had to call the police officer, and he came running, he came to help…' You know, they are taught, and they see it, that the police are not there to scare them, but simply he is there for their service. And what we dreamt about! I mean, if you compare that police officer with the police officer who was there like 25 years ago. . . . [Back then], when you see a police officer coming into the village, you know there is trouble. When you see a military guy coming like that, you need to vacate the village. . . . So, that's the history we want to [make]—peace! There must be peace." (UR Administrator D, S. P.)

Story #20: The Relative Safety of Rwanda

"A few years ago, in Johannesburg, I met a friend, a White lady, who had been here [in Rwanda] a few months, like three or four, and she went back home [to] Johannesburg. And I went there for another mission, and we got in touch, and we hadn't got time to meet before I had to travel back, so on my way back, I left the hotel and we agreed to meet at the airport. When we met at the airport, we sat there having coffee, and there was a group of other White guys there, and they saw us. I was with a Rwandan friend and with that lady. They said, 'hey, hey!' I said hi. And they said, 'are you from Zimbabwe?' I said no. 'From Malawi?' I said no. 'From Zambia?' No. They mentioned all those countries and then they said, 'then from where?' I think they were coming from a journey, and they were excited that they are going back home—probably they were leaving the country because they were in a big group. They shouted, 'from where?' I said, 'I am from Rwanda.' Everyone was scared! Then, [one of them] felt sorry and said, 'sorry, how is Rwanda?' And the voice was quite low and said, 'how is Rwanda, are you safe now? Are you okay?' So, I looked at them, and before I could say anything, the lady I was together with shouted and said, 'shame upon you! Do you think you are safe here? If you need safety, go to Rwanda!' . . . That's [what] you will find. . . because before I left my country here going to South Africa, the hotel was every 30 minutes reminding [me] of the insecurity around. Giving me messages, 'don't move with this-and-this; if you have good or valuable things with you, don't go out with them—leave them in the hotel. You will find a safe in the hotel. Just make sure you don't walk at night—do not do this. If someone knocks at your door, before you open, just look through and see who is that'…and I said, 'where am I going??' <*laughter from both*> The lady said, 'come on! Do you think you are safe here? Otherwise, if you want to be safe, try Kigali and feel the safety.' And they all got interested and surrounded us and the lady was preaching saying, 'come on! Can I walk alone in Juba? Can I walk at night alone? Even as early as 9:00 [p.m.], I cannot, but in Kigali, I could even go to nightclubs and dance, and at midnight I travel back home, I travel to the hotel alone and nobody [makes me feel unsafe].' . . . Or if police are there, if police come, you can tell them, 'I simply want to move from here to my hotel, which is here or there', and they will take you with your moto." (UR Administrator D, S. P.)

APPENDIX G

STUDY THROUGHLINE: RESEARCH QUESTIONS, DISCOURSE THEMES, INTERVIEW QUESTIONS, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Grouping #	Grouping Topic	Research Question	Discourse Theme	Interview Question Cluster	Finding #	Finding Content	Recommend-ation
1	**IMPACT**	How do University of Rwanda administrators, faculty members, and alumni affiliated with the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation envision the program's contribution to the development of leaders who will prioritize and be equipped to maintain peace and stability? 1a) How are insider perspectives different from those of leaders engaged in peacebuilding outside the program?	Higher education is integral to sustainable development and peace, especially in postconflict countries.	*IQ7-8*: Inculcating students with key themes, values & skills	1	The M.A. program seeks to inculcate students with specific themes, values, and skills, including an **equal valuation of theory and practice,** along with a deep **understanding of structural violence** as a driver of conflict.	**Embrace constructive criticism as nurturing rather than threatening.**
				IQ9-10: Nurturing social justice advocacy & deep community engagement	2	The M.A. program nurtures students' effectiveness in social justice advocacy and deep community engagement by enlarging their sense of **ethical responsibility to others** and by emphasizing the importance of **critical thinking**.	
				IQ11-12: Inspiring students with a coherent and empowering vision	3	The M.A. program envisions itself as producing alumnae who embody the 10 UR **Graduate Attributes**, but even more importantly, being a catalyst for their **personal transformation** as peace leaders.	
2	**IMPLEMENT-ATION**	How are educational leaders and other stakeholders making decisions related to achieving program goals? (e.g., What strategies are being employed? What constraints and tradeoffs do they face? What mission drove the program's evolution?)	There are unique structural challenges for higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa.	*IQ13-15*: Logistics of program design and support from partnerships	4	The logistics of the M.A. program's design were informed by an **expansion of CCM's mandate** from production of knowledge to dissemination of knowledge, but this **evolution required partnership** with both UR entities and foreign institutions.	**Mitigate bureaucratic disadvantages with increased autonomy and process transparency.**
					5	The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (**SIDA**) has been the program's most significant partner; however, M.A. program leaders have embraced the borrowing of best practices, while remaining **grounded in local realities**.	
				IQ16-18: Decisions affecting student diversity, equity, and gender parity	6	Since its inception, the M.A. program has invited **small cohorts of working adults** with significant experience and is designed to be **modular and part-time** to accommodate their participation.	
					7	The M.A. program has transitioned from gearing recruitment efforts towards only an initially limited number of institutions to later **offering an open call** to attract a broader target student body and has similarly gone from having primarily foreign professors to hiring **mostly Rwandan faculty** members.	
				IQ19-20: Mechanisms for addressing differences of opinion and conflict resolution	8	As far as inequities, the M.A. in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation offers **no subsidization of student tuition**, which means there are necessarily **socioeconomic limitations** to who can realistically participate. Similarly, although the M.A. program has close to **gender parity among the students**, there remains a **mostly male staff** among faculty members and administrators of both CCM and the UR.	
					9	In dealing with students, the M.A. program encourages differences of opinion via faculty members who embrace being **facilitators (rather than transmitters) of learning** and respect the expertise of students. Among program staff, it is difficult to gauge how conflict resolution is handled, due to a **complex hierarchical organizational structure**, and **distaste for public complaint** in Rwandan culture.	

Grouping #	Grouping Topic	Research Question	Discourse Theme	Interview Question Cluster	Finding #	Finding Content	Recommend-ation
3	**INSIGHTS**	From the perspective of study participants, what lessons can the program offer the fields of peace education and educational leadership?	Critical peace education offers a constructive response to structural violence.	*IQ21:* Perceptions of success	10	Regarding perceptions of M.A. program success, **alumnae expressed strong satisfaction** with their experiences, with only a few caveats, while faculty members and administrators from **CCM demonstrated great pride** in the program's accomplishments, only noting the strong need for more rigorous self-evaluation, and those **outside of CCM offered admiration** for program goals and achievements in influencing Rwandan peacebuilding.	**Diversify funding and partnerships by building mutually beneficial, ongoing international exchanges.**
				IQ22: Suggestions for improvement	11	Stakeholders in the M.A. program offered numerous **suggestions for improvement, primarily focused on program sustainability** that tended to fall under **four main themes**: 1) Increase program accessibility to students, financially and logistically, 2) Create deeper partnerships with relevant organizations, 3) Emphasize psychosocial well-being in both content and support structures, and 4) Expand investment in completion of Rwandan Ph.D.s, post-docs, and high-quality publications.	
				IQ23-24: Unique characteristics and misconceptions	12	The M.A. program offers many insights for the fields of peace education and educational leadership; however, the most frequent refrain that ran through most stakeholder discussions was the idea that **peace is a continuous journey** requiring ongoing investment and self-reflection, and that Rwandans embody this idea through strong collective **ownership over programs and progress**.	

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